







THE  
B O O K  
OF THE  
B O U D O I R.

BY  
LADY MORGAN.

"Je n'enseigne pas ; je raconte."  
— MONTAIGNE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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## TO THE READER.

THE first page of the following work tells <sup>\*</sup> its being's aim and object.<sup>†</sup> It is not worth the gravity of a preface; and will probably escape the distinction of a criticism. It is of a species scarcely admitted into the dignity of British literature, and belongs to that light class of writing in which the French alone excel. Its character is essentially egotistical, and its style inevitably careless. Time and labour might perhaps have cleared it of both these faults, and have rendered it a better work: but it would not then have been the work it was

intended to be—if, indeed, it was intended to be any thing.

The MS. volumes, from which its pages were extracted, have composed themselves; and I have copied not always what was best, but what was safest and most inoffensive. Living, as I occasionally have lived, among whatever is most noted, eminent, and distinguished, with reminiscences of all, I have yet confined myself to the mention of those to whom we are already posterity, or to those who have been so much and so long before the world, as to have become the property of the public. In all, I have found much good; and of all, I have said much: for, whatever party columny may have put forth to the contrary, any severity which may have appeared in my writings has been directed against principles rather than persons. I have written, “from my youth, up,” under the influence of one great and all pervading cause, Ireland and its wrongs. Truth to tell, it was not a very

gracious inspiration ; and it frequently opposed opinions, inevitably tinctured with bitterness, to a temperament, which those who know me in private life, will vouch for being as cheery and as genial, as ever went to that strange medley of pathos and humour.—the Irish character.

But the day is now fast approaching, when all that is Irish will fall into its natural position : when fair play will be given to national tendencies, and when the sarcastic author of the O'Donnells and the O'Briens, having nothing to find fault with, will be reduced to write, “*à l'cau rose*,” books for boudoirs, or albums for ladies' dressing-rooms. Among the multitudinous effects of catholic emancipation, I do not hesitate to predict a change in the character of Irish authorship.

I cannot, however, give this little work to the public without a word as to its title ; because I never will, knowingly, contribute to a delusion,

however innocent. All who have the supreme felicity of haunting great houses, are aware, that those odd books, which are thrown on round tables, or in the recesses of windows, to amuse the lounger of the moment, and are not in the catalogue of the library, are frequently stamped, in gold letters, with the name of the room to which they are destined: as thus;— “*Elegant Extracts, Drawing-room;*” “*Spirit of the Journals, Saloon,*” &c. &c. As my Book of the Boudoir kept its place in the little room which bore that title, and was never admitted into my bureau of official authorship, it took the name of its *locale*, which, by the advice of Mr. Colburn, it retains.\* I must, however, here declare, for the

\* Having mentioned how this trifling Work came to be written, a word may be said on how it came to be published. While the fourth volume of the “O'Briens” was going through the press, Mr. Colburn was sufficiently pleased with the subscription (as it is called in the trade) to the first edition, to desire a new work from the author. I was just setting off for Ireland, the horses literally

sake of truth, and the benefit of country ladies, that the word Boudoir is no longer in vogue in any possible way; that it is a term altogether banished from the nomenclature of fashion; and that I could scarcely have given my work a title less likely to advance its interests with the enlightened of the *bon ton*. This is an important fact, which I have only recently discovered. It is a subject upon which much, no doubt, may be said; but as I am going to France, I will reserve all I have to say till my return, in the conviction that *les lumières du siècle*, on a point so important, will

putting to—when Mr. Colburn arrived with his flattering proposition. I could not enter into any future engagement; and Mr. C., taking up a scrubby MS. volume, which the servant was about to thrust into the pocket of the carriage, asked “What was that?” I said it was “one of many volumes of odds and ends, *de omnibus rebus*,” and I read him the last entry I had made the night before, on my return from the Opera. “This is the very thing,” said the European publisher; and if the public is of the same opinion, I shall have nothing to regret in thus coming, though somewhat in *déshabillé*, before its tribunal.

A

TO THE READER.

there be afforded me, and every circumstance connected with the “rise, decline, and fall of the Boudoir” will be communicated without reserve or restriction. Till then, and in the glorious hope of returning to my poor, native country, an emancipated Protestant, I take my leave of that gracious public, of whom, whether at home or abroad, I have never had reason to complain, and whose grateful servant I have the honour to subscribe myself

SYDNEY MORGAN.

*April 4th, 1829,  
Kildare Street, Dublin.*

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## THE BOOK

or

## THE BOUDOIR.

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### MY BOOK.

LAST night, as we circled round the fire in the little red room in Kildare Street, by courtesy called a boudoir, talking about everything, anything, and nothing at all, I happened to give out some odds and ends, that amused those who, truth to tell, are not among the least amusable ; when somebody said, "Why do you not write down all this ?" and here is a blank book placed before me for the express purpose. But I suspect there is no talking upon paper, as one talks "*les pieds couchés sur les chenets.*" I feel, at least at this mo-

ment, that there is all the difference in the world between sitting bolt upright, before a marble-covered, blue-lined, lank, ledger-looking, 'Threadneedle-street sort of a volume, for the purpose of opening a running account with one's own current ideas, and the sinking into the downy depths of an easy chair, and "then and there, without let and molestation" (as the old Irish passport has it), giving a careless and unheeded existence to the infinite deal of nothings which lie latent in the memories of all such, as have seen and heard much, and have been "over the hills and far away." "Thoughts that breathe" will not always write; "words that burn" are apt to cool down as they are traced; visions that "come like shadows," will also "so depart;" and the brightest exhalations of the mind, which are drawn forth by the sunny influence of social confidence, like other exhalations, will dissipate by their own lightness, and (beyond the reach of fixture or condensation) "make themselves air, into which they vanish."

I never, in my life, kept a common-place-book for preserving such "Cynthias of the minute." I

have even an antipathy to all albums and vade-mecums, and such charitable repositories for fugitive thoughts, and thoughtless effusions—reveries which were never *rêvés*—and impromptus laboured at leisure. I hardly think I can bring myself to open a regular saving bank for the odd cash of mind, the surplus of round sums placed at legal interest in the great public fund of professed authorship: “*on renvoie tout cela à la pédantisme.*”

Still, however, in the days of pure pedantry, the days of the Scaligers, Pasquieres, •Balzacs, and Thuanuses, genius and simplicity, and high philosophy too, found frequent shelter in such daily ledgers of spontaneous thought, and feeling. “Each day of my life is a page in my book,” says the learned Menage, who scribbled his agreeable *Ana*, while Mesdames Sévigné and Deshoulières sat disputing in his chimney corner, on the merits of coffee, and of Racine, or the fashion of an *hurlubrelu*. It was such a book, lying temptingly open on the old oak table in the gothic library of the château Montaigne, that led the charming “*Michel, gentilhomme Perigordin,*” to note down, (in the pauses of more studied com-

position) those natural and amusing things, which, as he himself quaintly expresses it, come, “*à saute et à gambade.*”\* But then I am not Menage nor Montaigne.

The danger of a book like this, lies in the lure it holds out to egotism. There it is, always ready to receive the perilous confidences of self-love and self-complacency, like an old lady’s humble companion, or the confessor of a voluble devotee. “The reason,” says the always quotable Madame de Sévigné, “why devotees love their confessors, is the pleasure they have in talking of themselves, even when they have nothing good to tell: ‘*on aime tant à parler de soi.*’”† Oh, the terrible truth!

There is something too not less dangerous in the way-laying of such a book for every passing impression. What little sensations, which the world should never know, may there find permanency! What opinions may there be recorded, which to broach, were proscription! What honest indignation may there find vent against the falsehood of the professed friend, or the vileness of the successful enemy,—feelings which it is vain to ex-

\* “With a skip and a jump.”

† “We love so much to talk of ourselves.”

press, and undignified to expose. What mere ebullitions of temperament may there assume the shape of habitual sentiment—though even in the writing, they dissipate with the breaking forth of a sun-beam, or lose their acrimony with the shifting of a north-east wind.

If I had not then better cast away this volume, “white and unwritten still,” ere it bear evidence against me; and leave to “some hand more calm and sage—the leaves to fill,” who haply may make it the nucleus of one of those annuals, never destined to be perennial, or the repertory for some *souvenir*, soon to be forgotten? Such a book may have its value. It may preserve a sort of proof impression of one’s self, taken at various sittings, and in various aspects; and thus give one portrait more to the gallery of human originals, to illustrate the great mystery of identity,—that volatile subject, which changes as we analyse it. For even the hand which traced the first line of this farrago, is not the same agent of the same volition, with that which will write the last; though the being, in which it resides, is still technically the same. To leave such an auto-transcript behind one, may assist the moral

anatomist in his demonstrations, as the bequeathing what is called “our mortal remains” to the dissecting-knife promotes the science of the physiologist. In either case, there is much to pity, and much to wonder at; but what is most marvellous and admirable in both, is the inscrutable mystery by which the complicated machinery is set in motion, independently of the subject in which it works; constructed, perfected, moving, stopping!—the power unknown, the end unguessed! At this point, neither books nor bodies can be further of use. The anatomist drops his knife, the moralist his pen. At this point too I must drop mine: not that I am “weary of conjecture,” for I like the animating and enterprising excursion, even when it proves nothing; but,—I must dress for a ball!

Oh! what a refuge is folly against philosophy; what a shield is pleasure against persecution! How many have been burned at the stake, who never would have paid that terrible penalty had they learned to waltz! How many have been broken on the wheel, who would have escaped its tortures, had they been cut short in their unpardonable search after truth, by the necessity of dressing for a ball!

## EGOISM AND EGOTISM.

EGOISM and egotism—what a difference ! The one a vice, the other a weakness of temperament. The one inspires aversion, for it is always unsocial ; the other awakens ridicule, for it is frequently absurd. Egoism is in a great degree referable to modern manners, and it is among the drawbacks on civilization. Egotism is of all ages, and more an affair of structure than of convention. The egotist must be a very vain man, but he may be a gifted, and generally is an amiable one. If he had many serious defects to hide, he would not so frankly give himself up to public inspection. The pains he takes to canvass for public suffrage is a proof that he values opinion ; but the worst of it is, that the egotist entrenches on the self-importance of others—that irremissible sin in society, where every

man is his own hero, whatever he may be to his *valet de chambre*.

Egotism, when accompanied by endowments, is infinite in its resources. When it cannot relate, it exhibits; but it must always be before the scene, and occupy the audience. It is seldom found among the heaven-born members of high society; because egoism and not egotism is the inherent, almost organic vice of that class. The egoist is one who, uncalled upon by his necessities for exertions, and led by breeding to resolve all things into self—who, without effort to make, or suffrage to court, feels not the value of public opinion, or, feeling it, believes himself above it. Divested of warm affections, and independent of all sympathy, he is ever on the side of taste; because no predominant impulse leads him to its violation. He breaks no form of conventional propriety, nor shocks a prejudice of time-honoured ignorance. Devoted to self-gratification, he never seeks it by any greater risk, than comports with his habitual ease, and place in society. His gallantry, even when profligate, is passionless, and calculating; it is an air, not an enjoyment—an

item in his ostentatious externals—an addition to the sum of his superfluous luxuries.

The school of egoists is of recent date. As an affair of temperament, the vice must in all ages have shewn itself individually, where it dared ; but as a *ton*, as a fashion, the founder of the sect was the Duc de Richelieu. Among the English aristocracy and their humble followers may be found his chief disciples. In France, the revolution “scotch’d the snake,” if it did not “kill it.” For glory and distinction, the motives of action in the latter generation in France, are too demonstrative, for the self-recoiling *morgue* of concentrated egoism. Napoleon’s gallant marshals were all heroes, and may have been egotists ; but egoism belonged not properly to their new blood nor to their arduous habits.\*

Although the physiological causes of egoism must exist in all ranks and classes, (for selfishness is pretty generally distributed in all,) yet the egoist *par excellence* must be especially sought amongst the idlers of fashion, who, if not occupied with themselves, have nothing else to be busied about. Egotists

\* Whoever has read the ~~History~~ of the Campaign in Russia, by General Count Ségur, must feel the force of this observation.

exist more among men of stirring lives, who have been forced before the world. Heroes make excellent egotists ; they bring their excuse along with them, and render their vanity respectable, by the events on which it is founded. It was the egotism of the Moorish “ great captain” which won Desdemona, in spite of his dingy hue ; and I remember being once a little grazed myself by an *enfilade de batterie* of egotistical heroism, directed against my love of the marvellous, by one of the great captains of the present age. *Dio buono !* how I used to open my eyes and “ incline my ear,” while he, like a chevalier of old, or like “ *Aeneas after supper,*” related the tale of his own prowess ! With what delight, evening after evening, I hung upon his well-recited “ feats of broils and battles,—” apart from the egoistical circles, in which the chances of notoriety had associated us, and which, (composed of “ half the curled darlings of the nation,”) was as worn out on the subject of my hero and his victories, as on every other ; so that I was generally left “ sole auditress,” while he

“ From year to year,  
The battles, sieges, fortunes he had passed,  
Ran through.”

I remember, one evening, while thus occupied, observing a group of exquisites of both sexes looking slyly at us, and laughing *sous cape*. Though then in my noviciate of fashion, I knew enough of the great world, to be aware that a ridicule was worse than a crime ; and like all *parvenus*, fearful of incurring the ban of the empire into which I had been admitted, I planted my hero just as he was planting his victorious standard “on the moslem walls.” Flying to that great legislator of *ton*, whose word was then the charter of others, as well as mine, in such affairs, I asked “What is the matter ? What have I done, Lord A——?”

“Nothing, child ; only you are a spoony, that’s all.”

“A spoony ! what is a spoony ?”

“Something that is easily taken in ;—at the gambling table, by a black leg—in society, by a bore ?”

“But who is a bore ?”

“Oh, by Jove ! if you have not found out *that*, you must be left to your fate.”

“But why is —— a bore ?”

“Because all egotists are bores. It is really very amusing to see you, like a little *gobe-mouche*,

swallowing with avidity, what has surfeited us all long ago. What a God-send you must be to him ! There is nothing like a fresh importation from Ireland."

I bridled up like a charmer in Richardson's novels, and replied pertly, " I prefer an egotist with genius, to an egotist without it, at all times."

" That's your affair, dear ; but now, at least, you are a purchaser with notice."

" I have not, however, had notice to quit—so I will return to my egotist, and leave you to your egoists ;—who has the better bargain ?"

" We shall see," said Lord A——, drily.

He was right. I was obliged to give in, during a fierce combat and a long siege ; and so I struck long before the enemy hauled down a single colour.

The egotism of Lord Nelson went far beyond that of any of his " great competitors." Not that he talked much of his feats, (for " little would he have graced his tale in speaking of himself ;") but he listened with the frankest approbation to the verse or song that celebrated his exploits ; assisting at his own apotheosis with as much devotion, as any of the votarists who brought incense to his altar.

There was nothing so characteristic, or amusing, as the scenes in which he and Lady Hamilton exhibited together, adoring and adored ; during that short epoch of their fashion, which policy or caprice granted them, in spite of the frailty and the vulgarity of the one, and the very obvious intellectual mediocrity of the other. The stage was generally some saloon of supreme *bon-ton* ; the audience, the members of the exclusive circles ; and the prima donna, Lady Hamilton, whose ample person seemed to dilate before the piano-forte, while her fine full eyes were turned languidly on the hero of her theme and inspiration, and she sang, at the top of her Poll of Plymouth voice, the adulating ode, or the deifying cavatina. Meantime, the conquering hero “ leaned over her, enamoured,” bearing chorus, beating time, and echoing every pæan, raised to his own glory by London lyrists and Neapolitan laureates.

It was said of Napoleon, “ *c'est la moitié d'un grand homme.*”\* This is more than can be said of every hero : for some there are, not more than a third part.

\* “ That he was but the half of a great man.”

There are anecdotes extant of that ‘royal’ hero, “*Roi, le plus roi, qui onc fut jamais,*” Louis XIV. which afford a precedent, if not an excuse for the equally ridiculous vanity and egotism of the immortal Lord Nelson. “*Le soir on chanta chez Madame de Maintenon,*” says Dangeau, “*une ode de l’Abbé Genest ‘à la louange du Roi,’ la musique est de La Lande ; et le Roi la trouva si bonne que, quand elle fut finie, il la fit recommencer.*”

Lord Erskine was so noted for talking of himself, that he obtained the *sobriquet* of Counsellor Ego. He could scarcely have chosen a more interesting subject. Actors and actresses are apt to be egotists. They live so much before the public, that they suppose the world to be always engaged with them ; and yet live so little in the world, that their sphere of observation is limited to themselves and their profession, and to their successes and their wrongs, before and behind the scenes, *et voilà tout.*

The highest order of egotism, and by far

\* “ At night they sung an ode in praise of the king at Madame de Maintenon’s. It was by the Abbe Genest, the music by La Lande; and the king found it so excellent, that when it was finished he caused it to be repeated.”

the most delightful and beneficial to society, is autobiography. Where the life, indeed, of the writer is the mere every day personal adventures of pretending mediocrity, it is an impudent imposition, and meets its just reward in contempt and oblivion. But the egotism of genius, when mingled with great public events, illustrative of peculiar stages in society, is a debt due to posterity, which should be paid : it will not fail to be received with gratitude and delight. Thus have been received the memoirs of all the great men who have written ; and of all the agreeable women who have left behind them those charming pictures of society, as well as of themselves, which women only know how to sketch. They are among the great benefactors of humanity ; and the gracious sensations they excite render their works a better course of morals than any prescribed by collegiate discipline, or found in the crude pages of didactic essays. As long as we are occupied and amused, we are seldom vicious ; and (to reverse a trite quotation,) "angels are better than men, because they are happier ;"—so, down with the Doctors of the Sorbonne ; and "one cheer more" for the Doctors

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De Motteville, La Fayette, De Nemours, De Staël, De Montpensier.

I grieve to be unable to add some fair British writers to this list of sparkling memoirists: but the female authorship of these realms is too serious, perhaps too passionate, for the task. English women can write upon nothing but love and religion; and therefore they write little besides novels—serious or frivolous, sacred or profane. Wit and philosophy are very sparingly conferred upon them.

The few female auto-biographers who have graced the literature of England, were confined to the stirring times of the commonwealth, when the pressure of circumstances, by acting upon the strongest and finest feelings of woman, developed her intellect, and forced her upon active and even perilous existence. The two most brilliant instances of this charming *genre* of egotism are to be found in the memoirs of the fantastic Duchess of Newcastle, and in those of the heroic Mrs. Hutchinson;—both admirable illustrations of their respective classes, at the epoch in which they flourished; the one, of the pure, unmixed aristocracy of England; the other of its gentry, or highest grade of middle life.

In the long list of biographical egotism, I know but of two persons who have got out of the scrape handsomely ; Cæsar, the tactician in taste as in war, with his third person, —— and Bonaparte, who talks of his splendid views, and wondrous combinations, in a manner that makes the individuality of the man disappear before his powerful and personified intellect. I allude to the sketches and scraps dictated by him to Las Casas, &c. at St. Helena. His life was a perfect epic—one great dramatic action. What a subject he would have been for Shakspeare ! There is nothing of scenic effect in Richard the Third, or Julius Cæsar, finer than the picturesque situations so carelessly traced by the military pen of Rovigo. For instance—Bonaparte crossing the Red Sea at the head of his legions, precisely where Moses led his Israelites ; the peril in which his dauntless daring placed his devoted followers ; and his saving them by one of those rapid decisions of mind which characterize the ingenuity, as well as the firmness of genius. In all great exigencies, the man, as well as “ the woman, *who deliberates*, is lost !”

Another scene, still more picturesque, occurred

the night before the battle of Austerlitz,—the moon shining at its full upon the field, strewn with legions of the brave, who all, save the watch guards, slept,—how many soon to sleep for ever!—the emperor, in the midst of his army, stretched upon straw, under a rude shed, raised over his head by the tenderness of his soldiers, and sleeping so profoundly that his aid-de-camp was compelled to shake him roughly, when it was necessary that he should be roused to learn some movement of the enemy—his instantly vaulting on his saddled horse—his gallop to the outpost, and perilous survey of the Russian manœuvre—his return to his bivouac—his being recognised by the drowsy troops, whose rest his horse's tramp had broken,—their cry of *vive l'empereur!*—the lighting of straw torches, a spontaneous honour to their chief, till the whole field blazed—his return to his couch, and to that deep sleep from which he was to awaken to the crowning victory of his great career, that laid the throne of the western Cæsars at his feet, and placed the destiny of the emperors of the East in his hands!

One picture more, and I have done. The time,

the evening before the battle of Jena, when Napoleon found the artillery, which was to open the action, blocked up in a rocky ravine, from which it could neither advance nor retreat. His concentrated rage, his terrible silence, unbroken by one reproach of the unskilful commandant—his instant decision, activity, and remedy of the evil. Resuming his first vocation of a working engineer, he hastily gathers the cannoniers round him, distributing to one a torch, to another a pickaxe. Then placing himself at their head, he clears the brambles, cleaves the rocks, and opens a passage for the guns; and when the first carriage has passed, returns again to those obedient slumbers, which, like all else, then awaited on his powerful will. “*J'ai toujours devant les yeux,*” says Rovigo, “*ce qui se paroît sur les figures de ces canonniers, en voyant l'Empereur éclairer lui-même, un falot à la main, les coups rédoublés dont il frappoit les rochers.*”\*

That the life of such a man should be written

\* “I have always before my eyes the expression on the countenances of the men, as they looked on the Emperor with a torch in his hand, himself casting a light on the reiterated blows with which he opened the rocks.”

from the refuse of the *entresols* of the Tuileries, and the gossip of London drawing-rooms ! None but a soldier should write the life of a soldier, if he has not the egotism to write it himself. I am sure the Duke of Wellington is of my opinion ; and I hope he will furnish documents to some of his own gallant aids-de-camp and companions, to write his military memoirs, beyond the reach of national prejudices and sordid self-interest, to falsify and to disfigure his deeds and intentions. Let him not trust to the promises of living adulation. Be the fate of his imperial competitor his beacon and guide. As to his legislative memoirs, they are written in two words :—Catholic Emancipation !

## LOVE IN IDLENESS.

“This Signor Junio’s giant dwarf, Dan Cupid, lord of folded arms.”

How few love-novels are written now ! The market is closed, and the commodity out of date. A Scotch gentleman visited us some time back, and amused himself, while the conversation was occupied by a group of morning callers, in examining the books in my husband’s study. He had pitched on a shelf of natural history, and his attention dwelt on Lacépède’s voluminous work on fishes. As he ran over the volumes successively, his voice rising in a climax of tone, with his increasing surprise, he exclaimed — “ Fesh, fesh, fesh, hey ! Sirs, what sax bukes all on fesh !!! ” How many hundred thousand of *bukes* have been

written “*all upon love* ;” from the loves of Petrarch, in a thousand and one sonnets, to Mr. Moore’s “*Loves of the Angels*,” in one elegant volume ! In what various ways too, the subject has been treated, from “*Cassandra*,” and “*Le Grand Cyrus*,” in folio, to the *Nouvelle Héloïse*, in four goodly thick volumes ! and so on to Werter, in a primmer size, which, bound in black velvet, was hung by a gold chain round the neck of its fair readers, before the age of sentiment had passed away ! Sooner than write on love, a modern novelist has recourse to the *Newgate Calendar*, and the police reports of the *Morning Herald*.

The fact is, that there is less love in the world than there was ; and the stock is daily diminishing. The reason is clear—there is less idleness, and consequently less of the concentration which goes to make passion. That terrible schoolmaster too, who has, somehow or other got abroad, whips out poor little Love, wherever he finds him,—“ a domineering pedant o’er the boy ;” and the utilitarians will not hear of the brat, with his anti-Malthusian doctrines, but hunt him from the boudoir to the treadmill, to suffer and repent, with other young offenders.

Cultivation, business, and education, are “the very beadles to an humorous sigh.”

The idlest nations are ever the most gallant ; and Doctors’ Commons would have little to do, if the *désœuvrés* of fashion were reduced to assume the moral and physical activity of the *tiers-état*. The semi-civilized great are idle and intemperate : idle, by their institutions, which, being those of despotism, exclude the mass from a participation in national concerns ; and intemperate, because wealthy idleness gives the desire and the means of excess. What scenes of wassailing and riot passed among the courtiers of Henry the VIIIth and Francis the Ist ; and amongst those of Charles the IIId, and the early part of the reign of Louis the XIVth. In the highest state of savagery, men are governed by appetite ; in the highest degree of civilization they are guided by *convenance*. The Esquimaux, always in the field, and the Englishman always before the public, and occupied with commerce, politics, science, and the arts, have neither of them leisure to love, after the fashion of the Petrarchs and the Rousseaus.

Even now, however, we may have what the

French of our days call “*un sentiment*,” which is a very pretty amusing thing, leaving no scar behind—heart, conscience, and character, all intact, “*pourvu qu'on est sage*,” (as a Frenchwoman said to me the other day): an *item* in the code of conduct, by the by, never looked for in the days of old French gallantry.

## RACONTEURS.\*

I AM not aware of any word in the English language that precisely answers to the French "*raconteur*;" and, therefore, I suspect that the gift which it indicates is not in the catalogue of English accomplishments.

The English declaim better than they converse, and argue better than they declaim. Free institutions have favoured their successful cultivation of oratory; habits of public business have made them good logicians: but I doubt that any moral or political combination would have made them good *raconteurs*. The talent is too much an affair of temperament; which institutes and education may direct, but cannot change. It is this that constitutes national character, that renders the

\* *Raconteur*—a narrator.

modern Frenchman in so many respects what Cæsar found the Gaul; and preserves in the English yeoman of the nineteenth century, much of the moral physiognomy of the rude conquerors at Agincourt, and of the sturdy companions of Wat Tyler. One cannot well conceive a Greenlander being nursed into a Horace, or a negro into a Newton: one might as reasonably speculate on a potatoe being cultivated into a pine-apple, or a mulberry being grafted to the size and flavour of a melon.

The English temperament is too bilious, reflective, and abstracted, to lend itself to the art of light and pleasant narration; its affections are too deeply seated, its gaiety too fitful, its humour too cumbrous; but with a Frenchman, it is a natural endowment; and every epoch of the literary history of France can furnish its contingent of good *raconteurs*. In the earlier ages, the gift was turned to a profession; and its most eminent professors, under the denomination of *Conteurs*, went from province to province, and from château to château, sure of a brilliant reception, and a liberal recompence, in return for the story they ingeniously

invented, or the anecdote they pleasantly detailed.

“ Fableaus sont or moult en course,  
Mainte deniers en ont en bourse  
Cil qui les content.”

*Fab. MSS. du Roi.*

In modern France this talent, which always obtained a vogue, occasionally made a fortune. Every *salon* was thrown open to the *raconteur*; and the reputation commenced at the *petits soupers* and *boudoirs* of private individuals, received its seal from the admiration of the court and the favour of the monarch. The love of anecdote is a propensity, perhaps a weakness, inherent in royalty: and a Buonaparte and a Bourbon were alike indebted for some of their most agreeable moments to the most charming *raconteur* that perhaps even France has produced. Both, with royal impatience, were wont to cut a prosler short in his tedious tale; and, the same habit of command dictating to either despot precisely the same phrase, both would exclaim, “ *Allons, Denon, contez-nous cela !*”

The talent which, by its animation, renders French society so agreeable, has found its way into

French literature. The “*j'ai oui dire*” of Brantôme is always the prelude to some quaint and curious detail; and the delightful Montaigne owes his deathless reputation less to the learning of which he was so proud, than to the art, which he himself contemned as *bavardage*. Of the exquisite narrations of Madame de Sévigné it is almost superfluous to speak. Her details are all pictures; and her commonest incidents derive an intense interest from her happy manner of narrating them. What a difference between the love adventures of Madame de Montpensier and the Duc de Lauzun, as told in the ponderous autobiography of the dull and dogged princess, and as sketched in the pages of Madame de Sévigné! The modern dramatist, who has produced the story of Pomenars on the French stage, has added nothing to the dramatic effect of her exquisite narration.

Ninon de l'Enclos possessed the happy talent *de bien raconter*, in such perfection, that when Moliere read to her the first draft of his *Tartuffe*, and she related to him an adventure, of which she had been herself the *Elmire*, he declared, that if his piece had not been already written, he would

not have undertaken it: so much was her Tartuffe superior to his own. (“*Tant il se seroit cru incapable de rien mettre sur le théâtre d'aussi parfait, que le Tartuffe de Mademoiselle de l'Enclos.*”)

The immediate successor to these gifted women was Mademoiselle de Launay (Madame de Staal). Her narrative of her first interview with her patroness, the Duchesse de Ferté, is a brilliant illustration of the peculiarity of the art: and her well known, “*Allons, Mademoiselle, parlez un peu religion; vous direz en suite autre chose;*”\* has passed into a proverb. This fascinating talent is always notable for the *naïve* simplicity of manner that accompanies it—for that spirited frankness, which affectation (the quality of the false and the feeble) cannot, in all its assumption, accomplish. The gift is rarely and somewhat capriciously dispersed in society. It is sometimes possessed by persons, not otherwise distinguished; and genius, even of the highest order, is often wholly divested of it. I may be wrong; but I doubt if any circumstance could have bestowed it on the late celebrated

\* “Come, Mademoiselle, talk to us a little about religion; and afterwards speak on something else.”

Madame de Staël. The whole character and bent of her mind seems to have led another way. Her temperament, and the structure of her intellect were too German, too alembicated : while the school of Thomas and of Madame de Necker, in which she was brought up, was too *précieuse* not to have stifled any pre-disposition she might have possessed, to the natural graces, indispensable to a graphic narrator.

Mounted on the pedestal of her reputation, and twisting between her finger and thumb the laurel branch, which she always wielded (a *tic* or an emblem), Madame de Staël stood, like her own Corinne, in the centre of her circle, as if waiting at once for her audience and her inspiration : and when she was satisfied of the adequate proportion of both, she gave out her metaphysical and political oracles in measured phrases ; exhibiting an eloquence, which, whether she explained the doctrines of Kant, &c. opened the views of Necker, was more calculated to command admiration, than to excite delight. This was all very fine, — very intellectual ; but it was not the thing desired in a good *raconteur*. It is impossible to imagine such a Pythoness stepping down

from her tripod, huddling herself into her shawl and easy chair, putting her feet on the fender, and carelessly and gaily giving herself up to "*raisonner pantoufle*;" to arrest and charm the attention by that "sweet and voluble discourse," which pauses not to choose a theme, nor studies the art, by which it unconsciously fascinates the hearer.

It was the want, perhaps, of this happy simplicity, that lost Madame de Staël the suffrage of one, whose conquest was the sum of all her ambition. Willing to be won, Buonaparte refused to be lectured: and flying from the eloquent dictations of the daughter, as he had cut short the tedious dissertations of the father, he denominated the one a *phraseuse*,\* and pronounced the other "*au-dessous de sa célébrité*."†

It was, I believe, much about the time when he thus fled from the dissenting financier, whose lengthiness, like his politics, were ill adapted to the rapid "*en avant*" of modern military and legislative manœuvres, that Buonaparte gave a willing audience to a pleasant *raconteur*, whom chance

\* "A maker of phrases."

† "Beneath his reputation." This occurred in his interview with M. Necker, at Geneva.

threw in his way, in the person of an humble minister of the Genevese church. Napoleon, with his unerring tact, soon detected the talent which was latent beneath the unpretending simplicity of his chance companion. The conversation turned upon Kant and his philosophy. “Can you understand it?” asked the Emperor, in his *brusque* way. “Not a word, Sire,” replied the Curé. “Nor I neither,” rejoined Napoleon; “but Madame de Staël understands it all; (*Ni moi non plus; cependant Madame de Staël entend tout cela*);” and he laughed, and shewed his handsome teeth, delighted to find one clever man, at least, as dull as himself upon that vague and unsatisfactory doctrine.

To relate well, requires a minute and clear perception of particulars; which being strongly impressed on the mind, will be returned with all the truth, force, and illurminated effect, necessary to impress the auditor. Facts often appear too highly coloured, when they are but given in the same deep tone in which they were witnessed. Some minds receive their impressions of scenery, character, and incident, as an iron target receives the point of an arrow, which scarcely leaves a

trace behind it; while others of more penetrable stuff, take the form of their objects with a depth and sharpness, fully proportionate to the force that stamps it. Between these two classes of intellects there is little sympathy; and the possessor of the first will consider as exaggerations of truth and nature, the narrative, which reflects the ideas of the latter in the full vigour of their original conception.

Denon often told me that the best *raconteur* he ever knew, except Voltaire, was Voltaire's disciple, the Marquis de Vilette, the husband of *Belle et Bonne*. Ferney was a good school. Every one knows the anecdote of D'Alembert, Huber, and others, telling stories of robbers, à *qui mieux mieu*r, and Voltaire, when called upon, beginning, in the tone of a gossiping old woman—“*Messieurs, il y avait une fois un fermier-général—Ma foi j'ai oublié le reste!*”\* Denon told me his last visit to Voltaire was in 1776. He had been detained late at Geneva, and it was near midnight when he arrived at Ferney. He found the venerable patriarch sitting

“ Gentlemen, there was once upon a time a fermier-général—I have forgotten the rest.”

up to receive him, in that *salon* now so familiar to every English traveller. He was in high health and spirits; and after supper the two delightful *raconteurs* began to narrate—mutually excited, and mutually charmed. It was in vain that Madame Denis frequently came from her bed-room, in night-cap and slippers, to endeavour to get her uncle to bed. Voltaire, with the querulousness of a spoiled school-boy, resisting the similar attempt on the part of his nurse, pushed her away, with—“*Mais allez donc—qu'est-ce que ça fait, si je m'amuse?*”\*

The influence which Denon himself obtained over time, and even sometimes over nature, (for “he could murder sleep,” by the exercise of this amusing gift,) was often exemplified upon ourselves, during our various residences at Paris. Denon kept intolerably late hours—we intolerably early ones. After a month of *bals-parés—soirées—réunions*—and *opéras*, we were obliged to give in, and to stay one night at home; and so issued orders accordingly, and sent the servants to bed.—When, lo! as the last lamp was put out, the last

\* “There, there—go away—what does it signify if I am amused?”

ember fading, and we were yawning our way to our bed-room, across the gloomy antichamber of our old hotel in the Fauxbourg St. Germain, a loud ring was heard, the great gate invisibly opening, creaked slowly on its hinges, and the wheels of a cabriolet came rattling over the paved court. Back we ran—lest our chamber lights should shine forth from the windows, and bring up the unseasonable intruder—while *Pierre* the *frotteur*, putting in his melo-drama head, asked, interrogatively, “*Madame n'y est pas—n'est-ce pas?*” and then flew to forbid the nocturnal visitor. But it was in vain : he was already in the anti-room—and we heard the voice of Denon, saying “ Go to bed, my good fellow—there, that will do;”—and in he came on the very tip-toe of excitation, humming “*On revient toujours,*” with applicable emphasis. He was all star, ribbon, and the legion of honour; in full dress, both in spirits and person. He had dined with one of the ministers; and had not yet got rid of the fervour of an agreeable party, where he had justified the partiality of Buonaparte, by charming even the ultras themselves.

He came to bestow all his brilliancy upon us, as he was wont to do on similar occasions; and we were as much bored at the delightful visit, as if it had been all the tediousness of those who know so well how to be tedious: so there we stood, yawning and smiling, with a sort of galvanic contortion, at once to show our courtesy and drowsiness, with each a chamber candlestick in hand, and reiterating “But we were going to bed, my dear Denon.”—“I see it,” said Denon, and gently taking my candle, he lighted the *bougies* on the table—drew a chair for me near the fire—threw a log on the hearth, and, with a petitioning air, solicited “*encore un petit moment.*” “Our husband and ourself” exchanged looks of mutual annoyance, and yawned ostentatiously our unwilling assent; wondering at the influence of the miserable *physique*, or that any state of exhaustion could reduce us to so low an ebb, as not to relish the society of one we loved so well and admired so much.

Denon had that day made me a present of his superb work on Egypt (the large edition), and the enormous volume lay upon the ponderous marble

table, in the centre of the room, which seemed by its strength to have been built on purpose to receive it. We had been looking over the plates, and Denon took out his pencil and wrote the names of some of the eminent persons whose portraits they contain. Then drawing close to the fire, he put on his *raconteur's* face, and gave us such curious and animated details of his sojourn in Egypt with Buonaparte—of his intimacy with Dessaix, and with others of the *notables* of the expedition, together with the various scenes and circumstances incidental to the enterprise,—that insensibly we became as animated in our questions as he was in his narration.

From Egypt we got to the funeral of Dessaix on Mount St. Bernard, (a picture worthy of Poussin,) and thence to the German campaigns. He described the entrance into Potsdam, etched to the life, like a proof copy of one of his own engravings from Rembrandt or Paul Potter; not a light, not a shade was wanting! and the tones and gestures of the conqueror were given, as if he lived and moved before us. Their visit to Sans Souci, and the flattering interest with which Buonaparte inspected the apartments,

where nothing had been changed since their occupation by Frederick the Great, were not left to mere narrative; they were acted to the life: and the plunder of the *armoires* and *scrétairecs*, were represented in a most robber-like manner. The emperor had the sword of Frederick for his share of the spoils; Denon's booty was equally characteristic—a MS. *brouillon* of the king's poetry, in his royal autograph, with Voltaire's corrections. Under some of the stanzas was written “*digne des meilleurs poëtes Français*;”\* and under others the simple corrective criticism of “*fie donc !*” This was what Voltaire called “washing the king's linen.”

The sympathy of Napoleon for his wounded soldiers, and his personal attention to them, have been often recorded. His anxious visits to the field of battle after the contest was decided—his feeling the pulse and wiping the wounds—his administering cordials with his own hands—are facts well known, which won him the love of his army, no less than his prowess. Denon had been with him in one of these pious visitations, and he was so affected by the dreadful spectacle, that it became

\* “Worthy of the best poets of France.”

the nightmare of his dream. He arose with the dawn and returned to the field, in the hope of rescuing some still living beings from the heaps of dead that strewed it. In the features of an officer, he thought he recognized a friend, and on examining more minutely, he perceived some tokens of lingering vitality. He endeavoured to extricate the body from the dead horse under which it lay ; but his strength failed him. There was not a moment to be lost—looking round him for assistance, he observed two men taking their station on an overthrown piece of artillery, coolly surveying the scene, and writing in their tablets. They were easily recognised as the German commissaries of interment. He flew to solicit their assistance ; but both replied in unison, “*Monsir, nous sommes ici pour enterrer les morts.*” “*Bon,*” said Denon, “but you will surely assist me in saving the living.” Without pausing in their melancholy task, they again replied, “*Nous sommes ici uniquement pour enterrer les morts.*” Denon in vain had recourse to persuasion, to bribes, to threats ; nothing moved the phlegm of the Germans : they heard him out patiently, and

repeated for the third time ; “*Fous êtes cin bon Monsir, mais nous sommes ici pour enterrer les morts.*”\* This writes flatly ; but when told most dramatically, with the impassibility of the German physiognomy, and the guttural German accentuation, it was irresistible ; and thus our delightful *raconteur* went on “from grave to gay,” with equal pathos and humour, making us laugh and cry, and winding us up and down at pleasure.

In the midst of a most interesting adventure—the scene Venice, the time a moonlight evening, the place a balcony in the palace Benzoni, and the heroine, the beautiful and well known “*Biondina in Gondoletta,*”—he paused abruptly, with a hushing movement of his finger, marking emphatically the deep swing of the clock in the Tuileries striking three. He arose all confusion and apologies, for having led us into such unseasonable vigils, and was hurrying off, when I detained him with, “but finish your story.” “*Trois heures bien sonnées,*”† replied Denon, already at the door ;

\* “You are a good gentleman, but our business here is to bury the dead.”

† “It has struck three.”

while I answered in the words of Voltaire, “*Mais qu'est-ce que ça fait, si je m'amuse?*” “*A la bonne heure,*” said Denon, triumphantly, “I saw on entering that I was a bore;\* that you had taken your determination, and I took mine; so good morning—I'll finish my story another time:” and with this trick of the tale-teller of the Arabian Nights, he tripped off as *leste* at seventy, as at seventeen—sprang into his cabriolet, and rattled out, as he had rattled in, his horse and driver as much on the alert as himself. The whole thing was French, exclusively French—the *raconteur*, horse, driver, and cabriolet, included.

The Italians have never been celebrated as *raconteurs*; the organization, which gives them their *improvisatori*, is perhaps in precise opposition to the necessary qualifications of a *raconteur*. The sure, rapid, deep, but careless touching-off, which gives colloquial narration its charm and spirit, the imitative humour, inevitable mimicry, appropriate gesticulations, changeful accent, and vivid conception, of the fact or scene related, require quite another sort of *physique* from that which forms the slow, solemn de-

\* Un fâcheux.

claimer, and oracular *improvisatore*—who looks all in the clouds, warming his fancy with unearthly fires, and arranging his ready-made phrases and conventional rhymes, with eyes up-raised, and glance of fanciful abstraction—apart, and beyond all the graphic realities of life. Even in conversation, the Italians are more impressive than agreeable—more passionate than witty;—they talk in sentences à *longue haleine*, and forget that the world was made in six days—the first and greatest lesson given by Providence on the value of time, even within view of eternity!

The Italians complain of the disproportionate number of *seccatori* (*Anglice*, bores) which creep into their circles; without accounting for the circumstance. But men who by their religion and institutions, are forbidden to think freely, or to discuss those great questions which concern the main facts of life, must be tied down to matters of minor importance. They are impelled to substitute words for deeds, and are rendered feeble, in their intellectual intercourse, because they are false in their political position. Still “their stars are more in fault than they.” Boccaccio was no bad *raconteur*; Ariosto knew how

to relate ; and from the *novellisti* of the free states of Italy in her glorious middle ages, Chaucer and Shakspere borrowed their most humorous details. Strong and stirring combinations will always produce striking and graphic delineations.

But of all the *raconteurs* in the world, (the French excepted)—they, whose own story is so lamentable to relate, and so piteous to hear,—the poor Irish are the most humorous and amusing. So many causes, physical and political, have conspired to form and finish this talent in the Irish, that it would be irrelevant to the lightness of the present theme to enter on them. It is a curious fact, that Ireland, like France, had her *conteurs*, from the earliest periods ; who, by the significant name of Dres-beartagh\* (story-tellers), made a part of the establishment of great families down to the latter end of the 16th century. “ The great men of their septs,” says Sir W. Temple, “ among the many offices of their establishment, which continued always in the same family, had not only a physician and a poet, but a tale-teller. A

\* Dres means, literally, “ news.”

very gallant gentleman of the north has told me, of his own experience, that in his wolf-huntings there, when he used to be in the mountains three or four days together, and lay very ill at nights, so that he could not well sleep, they would bring him one of these story-tellers, who, when he lay down, would begin a tale of a king, or a giant, or a dwarf and a damsel, and such rambling stuff; and continue it, all night long, in such an even tone, that one heard it going on whenever one awaked."

This is not precisely the effect that a modern *raconteur* would like to produce. But the talent, the gift, was there; and the whole scene connected with it, the wolf-hunter, the mountains, and the story-teller, are all curious and picturesque, and not a little illustrative of the wild and primitive state of Ireland, even down to the times of Sir William Temple, the patron and master of Swift.

One of the last Irish *conteurs* by profession was still living about thirty years ago, in the county of Galway, and the name of Cormac Common the *Fin-sgealaighthe* or *Dres-beartagh*, the "man of talk," has not yet passed away in that province,

which is still the repertory of all that is most national in Ireland. Blind, poor, but gifted, Cormac early adopted a profession consonant to his position and his endowments. The tale he narrated, and the genealogical illustrations which he picked up in his wanderings, and which he eloquently adorned, were his passports alike to the mansions of the great, and to the cabin of the lonely—his letter of credit on the festivities of the wake, and his billet on the hospitality of the fair. He was a poet also, no less than a story-teller; and we owe to him the oft-told and beautiful tale of Ellen na Roon, which he threw into verse, and adapted to an air of his own composition. More than one Italian Syren has owed the enthusiastic raptures she has inspired in an Irish audience, to the notes of poor Cormac.

I remember telling Madame Catalani, when she was paying me a morning visit in Dublin, that I did not like the manner in which she had the night before jerked out the last notes in “Johnny Adair;”—that the air was not Scotch, but Irish, (of which its smooth, flowing melody, in regular progression, so characteristic of Irish music, was a

proof). We went to the piano-forte ; and I gave our Irish way of singing the passage. Madame Catalani tried it—liked it, but doubted that the air was Irish. To satisfy her doubts, I gave her its history, with the birth, parentage, and education of Cormac, its composer ; and a sketch of the story of its subject, pretty Ellen Kavanagh, into the bargain. Her charming *naïveté* was instantly under arms ; she would have the story in French ; and when I had done it, I was quite surprised to find how well the loves and sorrows of Caroll O'Daly and Ellen O'Kavenah, with all the Irish idioms, and grating gutturals, could be translated into the precise phrases of "*Messieurs les quarante.*" True passion is translatable into all languages ; with conventional feelings it is quite the reverse.

Cormac Common told his stories in prose. His verses he recited to a sweet, wild recitative, whose modulations are said to have been diversified by cadences of peculiar beauty.

" In rehearsing any of Oisin (or Ossian), or any composition in verse," says one of the most accomplished of his surviving auditors, Sir William

Ouseley, “ he chaunts them pretty much in the same manner as our cathedral service.”

The national endowment, which once gave a rank, still exists in Ireland in an eminent degree; though no longer, as of old, bestowing an hereditary *grade*. It is chiefly confined, however, to the “ mere Irish,” whose temperament lends itself to receive impressions with force, and to give them out with felicity. While the mixed race of Cromwellian colonists and Scotch undertakers preserves the even tenor of its way, “ sober, steadfast, and demure,” and takes the route which in Ireland “ leads on to fortune,”—the more sensitive descendant of the aborigines—alive to every external form, and colouring every fact with the glowing medium of his mind—led more by fancy than by interest, and satisfied with the social apotheosis produced by social endowments,—lives too often for the amusement of others, rather than for his own advancement. Who that remembers Edward Lysaght will not apply to him this assertion, so applicable to his genius and to his fate?

It is certainly amongst the most Irish members of Irish society, that the best *raconteurs* are still

to be found ; and it is among the many privations inflicted upon those English officials, who are sent to administer our proconsular government, that they have been restricted to the same dull round of office society, as had stupified their predecessors,—a society into which the wit and humour of the natives are so rarely permitted to penetrate. What yawnings might have been spared to bored vice-roys, and to listless secretaries, had they been allowed to throw open their *salons* to that humour and colloquial vivacity, so long proscribed by the ascendancy ! However powerful at the bar, and eloquent in the senate Irish intellect may appear, it is only under the influence of social feelings that Irish spirit kindles into its brightest lights. It is in the collision of social contact that it strikes out its most sparkling emanations. In the sanctuary of private intercourse, its reckless confidence and careless gaiety suspect no treachery and know no restraint. Even penal laws are forgotten, under the sacred protection of the law of hospitality ; and those, disqualified by religion for the dull routine of office, prove their claims by nature to the highest ranks in the great commonwealth of wit.

Whoever has read those delightful Irish articles, which give such *éclat* to the most fashionable and popular of British periodicals,—whoever has laughed or wept over those pages of mingled pathos and humour, its Irish sketches,—or has chatted with Canova and Cammucini on the arts of Rome, in the same miscellany, would find those delineations cold and feeble, could he witness the superior animation, with which I heard them given, *vivâ voce*, at our own round table of ten. There, the narrators added to the raciness of Irish humour, the high finish of dramatic mobility, the tone, the look, the accent, which constitute the merit of a well-told tale, but which will not print. To judge of this natural gift in all its felicity, it were well to become the auditor of one, whom it is a boast to know,\*—who, whether he tells his humorous Irish story round the festive board of his own paternal mansion in Kildare, or, in his pretty hotel in the *Chaussée d'Antin*, relates his anecdote, in French, rivalling the *purisme* of Madame de Genlis, to the delight of listening academicians, and the envy of professed *beaux esprits*, still most

\* P. L——n, Esq. of M——, in the county of Kildare.

happily illustrates that description of a *raconteur*, which he who has left no subject untouched, and was himself the best of story-tellers, has bequeathed to posterity—

“ A merrier man,  
Within the limit of becoming mirth,  
I never spent an hour’s talk withal.  
His eye begets occasion for his wit,  
For every object that the one doth catch  
The other turns to a mirth-moving jest ;  
Which his fair tongue (conceit’s expositor)  
Delivers in such apt and gracious words,  
That aged ears play truant to his tales,  
And younger hearings are quite ravished :  
So sweet and voluble is his discourse.”

## ETERNITY.

A COLLECTION of the opinions and desires of individuals, respecting eternity, would afford good food for meditation. The desire for existence beyond the grave is an almost inevitable consequence of the organic desire to live in the flesh ; yet few would relish an eternity of the life they now lead, or even consent to retrace the past. Horne Tooke was among these few, and was so satisfied with his mortal career, as to wish its repetition in a perpetually recurring series. One day at dinner, he said, “A little Brentford election—a little trial for high treason (though, on another occasion, he said he would plead guilty, rather than undergo a second speech from the Attorney General)—a little contest with Junius—a little everything, down to the hare upon the table.”

This, however, was the sentiment of a man refreshed by good cheer, and enlivened by good wine ; and the philosophy of the dinner-table is always suspicious. One must appeal from “ Philip drunk to Philip sober,” to come at the real opinion of the individual.

“ L'esprit que tient du corps,  
En bien mangeant, remonte ses ressorts ;”

but the tones of an overstrained instrument are always false ; and the proverb of ‘ truth in wine’ fails in its application to the instance in question. To judge with *sang-froid* of existence, the party must be neither full nor fasting.

## HORNE TOOKE.

HORNE TOOKE used to tell a juvenile story to my husband, (who in his boyhood occasionally partook of the ‘Diversions of Purley,’) very illustrative of the narrator. Horne, when at Eton, was one day asked by the master why a certain verb governed a particular case? he answered, “I don’t know.” “That’s impossible!” said the master. “I know you are not ignorant, but obstinate.” Horne, however, persisted, and the master flogged. After punishment, the pedagogue quoted the rule of grammar which bore on the subject, and Horne instantly replied, “I know that very well; but you did not ask for the rule, you demanded the reason.” Here we have the perspicuity of the mature dialectitian, and the dogged obstinacy which would not yield a step to authority, and could purchase a victory at any expense of suffering. Opinions may change, but the man, in his leading characteristics, is at fifty what he is at fifteen.

**RICHARD KIRWAN, Esq.**

THERE is scarcely a catholic family of gentility in Ireland, whose story, if impartially told, would not illustrate the misrule by which the prosperity of the country has been overthrown, and its genius nullified. From the beginning to the end of the last century, to have been born a catholic was a stigma, which no talent could efface, no patriotism remove. To exhibit either, was, at one period, to ensure proscription, or at least persecution ; and the market opened for Irish abilities abroad, was so much more profitable, honourable, and secure, that few of the condemned faith remained in their native country, whose endowments exceeded the quality demanded for home consumption.

While all Europe applauded the genius and hailed the scientific researches of Richard Kirwan, (one of the most distinguished chemists and philosophers of his time,) he was utterly unappreciated, and all but unknown in his native land ; and, but for an accident, he probably would never have

returned to the country, from which his religion had banished him, to give to it the benefits of his knowledge and the glory of his name.

Richard Kirwan, of Cregg Castle, in the county of Galway, was the descendant of one of the most ancient and respectable families of Connaught,\* a province in which few families condescended to date from a more modern epoch, than the flood. He was born in the year 1734, a fearful time in Ireland. Being a younger son, he was (like all the *cadets* of his rank and class) sent to a foreign country to receive the benefit of a liberal education; and he passed his boyhood and early youth at the seminary of St. Omer, where, having completed his classical studies, he gave himself up to natural science and philosophical pursuits, with such enthusiasm and such brilliant success, as declared a higher vocation, than he would have been permitted to follow in his own country. The death of his elder brother, by calling him to the succession of a noble estate, enabled him to follow with more effect the bent of his intellect; and he con-

\* The Kirwans are the only aboriginal family who were admitted into the Thirteen Tribes of Galway.—“As proud as a Kirwan,” is a Galway proverb.

tinued to cultivate science with that persevering diligence, and eager love of truth, which are ever the tests of the highest order of genius. As a chemist, for many years he stood alone; and if, afterwards, he was outstripped in the career of improvement, by more youthful successors, he still led the way to some of their most important discoveries. Living much abroad, where he was most known and esteemed, he was elected a member of the academies of Stockholm, Berlin, Upsal, Jena, and Philadelphia; as he was, afterwards, Fellow of the Royal Societies of London and Edinburgh. It was not, I believe, till long after these foreign honours were showered upon him, that he was elected President of the Royal Irish Academy, and created a Doctor of Laws in the Irish University. His unrivalled mineralogical attainments pointed him out also to the government, as the fittest person to hold the office of Inspector General of his Majesty's mines in Ireland.

From that period, he resided chiefly in his native country—sometimes at his mansion in Rutland-square, and occasionally, as long as his health permitted, at his patrimonial castle of Cregg. The victim of a singular affection of the throat, which

prevented him from eating in company, Mr. Kirwan retired from what is called “the world;” and, much more celebrated than known, he lived only with the literary, the liberal, and the scientific, (in Ireland, a very select and circumscribed circle;) but he kept up a correspondence with all that was most distinguished in Europe. Of his numerous works, those most known are his “Elements of Mineralogy ;” “ Geological Essays ;” “ Analysis of Mineral Waters ;” “ Logic, or an Essay on the Elements, Principles, and Different Modes of Reasoning ;” “ Metaphysical Essays ;” “ Essay on Phlogiston ;” and his work on the “ Temperature of Different Latitudes,” which was, I believe, his last.

I remember, when I was a child (*du temps du bon Roi Dagobert*), hearing a great deal of Mr. Kirwan, and of chemistry: not that my family were particularly given to that, or any other of the sciences, (good folks !) though we had all a great calling to the arts. But the most eminent chemist of the day was an Irishman—and, still more, a Connaught man—and, more still, a Galway man—and, beyond all this, we were kin to the

whole Thirteen Tribes of Galway, of which the Kirwans were one; “aye, in truth, dear, from Maoldal-hreock down,” as my father used to say: for upon such Irish lore I was fed from the cradle. Thus the name of Kirwan got associated in my infant mind, with that of Shakspeare, Handel, and Carolan the Irish bard; the three *Dii majorum Gentium* of our household altars.

My father (as fine and genuine a specimen of the true Irish soil, as the Irish wolf-dog) discovered in me an apt predisposition for all that was Irish—for its music, its poetry, its wild and imaginative fables, and local gossip; and “the genius of my country found me,” as the immortal Robert Burns said, not indeed “*at the plough*,” but on my father’s knee, listening, with open mouth, upraised eyes, and tremulous attention, to that species of “rambling stuff,” called in the language of the land, so early my inspiration and my theme, *Shanaos*.

It was in enumerating the glories of his native province, the worthies it had produced, and the antiquity and respectability of its Thirteen Tribes, that my father was wont particularly to dilate on the illustration thrown on the family of the

Kirwans by some of its living members: and having sketched off the genealogical distinction of the Forts, or Fuentes, the Joyces, the Trenches, the Blakes, and Bodkins (or the "*Buaidh Baudikin*," as he called them), he always paused in long digression on the family of the Kirwans—or, as he pronounced it the O'quirivans, "for, my dear, the Kirwans, I am sorry to say, dropt *the vowel* in the troubles; like many others, who dared not exhibit the O or the Mac;—(which was our own case, God help us!) and the Mac-owens, *Anglice* Owenses, and the O'quirivans, or *O'Kirwans*, remain stripped of these family patronymics to this day. But they are, ever were, and will be, a great family. It was one of the Kirwans of Castle Hacket who first introduced glass windows into county Galway; and I have heard tell that the first tea-pot seen in the province, was in the buffet of the Kirwans of Blindaere. But the Castle Hackets have to boast of producing that inspired preacher, Doctor Kirwan—the greatest pulpit orator, as Father O'Leary assured me, since the time of Bossuet. Then there are the Kirwans of Cregg, their chief, at this day, being

the greatest chemist and philosopher in Europe. I remember well, when Richard Kirwan first returned from abroad to Cregg Castle, seeing him walk of a Sunday to the Mass House, on the road-side, in a rich suit of embroidered clothes ; his *chapeau-bras* under his arm, and picking his steps along the dirty road, with brilliant stone buckles in his shoes. He was a tall, elegant, comely young man then, and spoke good Irish, though somewhat too fond of interlarding his discourse with foreign phrases. He was then, what is called in Irish a “*chi shin*,”\* and we little thought he would have turned out the greatest philosopher and chemist of his age.” This was an image ; the true source of deep and indelible impressions : and there it is, fresh as I received it—a proof copy, not a line worn out.

It was probably this graphic sketch, and the ideas, associated with it, of the value of philosophy and the importance of chemistry, which, at a very early period of my life, influenced my pursuits. For before I was fourteen I had read Locke (which chance threw in my way in a parlour

\* A person of remarkable appearance.

window) with infinite delight; and I imbibed a very ardent, but very short-lived passion for chemistry, not a little seduced by hearing a great deal of the charms of Pauline Lavoisier, and reading some of her experiments. My experiments, however, were cut short by my burning my fingers severely with phosphorus, while fired by the ambition of frightening my maid, by writing flaming letters on the walls of her bed-room in a dark night. The danger I incurred of being burned to death, and the fright my unlucky experiment caused to my family, checked my "vaulting ambition;" and thus my love of philosophy fell a victim to my love of fun. From that moment--

" Fair Science, to you  
I then bid a long and careless adieu."

The restless vivacity of intellectual youth, feeling its way to truth, and impelled, by its own energies, to experiments upon all sorts of knowledge, is frequently mistaken for a decided vocation to some one subject, for which the student has neither will nor organization. Nature, however, left free to act, soon finds her own level, and discovers her own bent. It is the folly of parents to force or restrain her. She may be assisted—she cannot be

reorganized : and though it may be easier to inculcate science, than to inspire a talent for the arts, yet mediocrity in both must be the consequence of those forced marches of mind, which enfeeble the victim, without attaining the end.

But though I gave up chemistry, I had not forgotten the chemist ; and I borrowed and read the works of Richard Kirwan—at least, as much of them as I could understand ; and perhaps a little more—for I dipped into his Elements of Mineralogy, worked hard at his Essays, and picked up just enough of his favourite doctrine of Phlogiston, to astonish the vulgar and amuse the wise ;—among whom I reckoned my governess, and my writing-master. Truth, however, to tell, my ideas of the profound and celebrated philosopher still remained mixed up and associated with my father's description of the tall, comely, elegant young man, picking his step : through the mud of Connaught roads, with diamond buckles in his shoes, and an opera hat under his arm.

“ In process of time when school was up, and “ Alley Croaker made a mighty noise”—when one “ wild Irish girl” brought the other into notice—it became the fashion to ask that other

and her Irish harp to Dublin parties. This (*par parenthèse*), not because she wrote novels, and was an honest, pains-taking little person, leaving no calling for the idle trade, and turning to account the *petit bout de talent*, given her, by Him, from whom all is derived, to lighten the burden, which misfortune had heaped on her family ;—but because she was the *enfant gâté* of a particular circle, and lived with the Lady Harringtons, Asgills, and all sorts of great official, English ladies. As for the Irish Protestant Ascendancy dames, the Mrs. Chief Baron this, and Mrs. Chief Justice that, Mrs. Commissioner of wide streets, and Mrs. Secretary of the paving board, she might have perished in the streets, in want or infamy, before one of their ascendancyships would have stretched forth a finger to save her from either. But, “let that pass,” as the Scotch novels say.

It happened, that shortly after the publication of the Wild Irish Girl, as I sat making up one of those “tissues of woven air,” in which I then clothed my heroines, and in which I intended to dress myself for a ball at the Barracks, given that night by Lady Augusta Leith,—a plain, dark, old fashioned

chariot drove to the door, and up came a card, thus inscribed—"Mr. Kirwan, to pay his respects to the fair authoress of the Wild Irish Girl."—My stars! what a fuss! The great Richard Kirwan, the philosopher! the chemist! the comely! the elegant! the celebrated! What stowing away of breadths and gores (we had not come to *ruches* and *fubulas*)—what pushing of work baskets under the sofa, and ramming the Sorrows of Werter into the bread basket!—for work, Werter, and bread and butter, were then all in equal requisition.

I flew first to the harp, to get up an attitude, (like poor Mathurin), and then back to the table to seize my pen like 'Anna Matilda;' and when the door opened, I was placed in a thoughtful position, with the contemplative look of a doctor of the Sorbonne, or of Lydia Languish; but the apparition, which for a moment halted at the threshold, and then moved on in solemn gait, actually made me start. A tall, gaunt figure, wrapped from neck to heel in a dark roquelaure, with a large-leaved hat "apped low over the face, presented the very picture of Guy Faux, with nothing wanting but his dark lantern. 'The comely,

the elegant young man disappeared from my imagination ; and the venerable, but very singular-looking philosopher, " stood confessed."

Mr. Kirwan, with all the grace of the old school, moved his hat, and instantly replacing it on a full, old-fashioned peruke, pleaded the necessity for covering his head, on account of some disorder, which rendered it dangerous to do otherwise, even in a warm room. After a few hems and haws on my part, and a fixed stare on his, we fell to discourse, and the conversation soon became animated, and to me highly interesting. It arose from his taking up a book that lay on the table, and had replaced my Werter. This was unlucky : he threw down the book with indignation, and cautioned me against what he called its " selfish sophistry," adding, " Young lady, you have too much imagination and too much feeling, to give up your precious time to such works as this ;" and he then attacked the doctrines of Helvetius, with more feeling than logic. His own philosophy being founded in his quick and almost morbid sensibility, he would not allow self-love to be the *primum mobile* of all

human action. Sympathy was his leading dogma ; and the predominancy of good his creed.

While we were talking, I perceived, from the window near which we were seated, the wretched skeleton of a scarcely living horse, which had been turned out to die on a piece of waste ground, not yet built on. The bones had nearly pierced the skin, and it fell as we looked on it, and died. " So much for the prevalence of good," I said. " What must have been the sufferings of that poor animal, since it first began to fail in strength and utility, and was exposed to the brutality, ignorance, and disappointed avarice of its owner, who has thus turned it forth to die in agony and in want ! Yet what had that poor beast done to merit such a fate ? For him no future compensation exists—no bright hereafter repays, to all eternity, his sufferings on earth. But such is the lot of nearly the whole brute creation ; to serve and suffer,—to be incapable of crime, and yet to feel its direst penalties."

The countenance of Mr. Kirwan became gloomy and agitated ; he turn'd away from the window, and, seating himself by the fire, after a long silence, he addressed me, in a solemn and impressive

manner, that affected me deeply, and left its influence fixed on my mind. He began by observing, that the apparent sufferings of the animal who had died under our eyes, had for a moment elicited the most painful and piteous sympathy; that the idea of sufferings imposed without a cause on the part of the sufferer, and which were to have no retribution, no recompence, was too painful an idea to indulge in, and too derogatory to the wisdom and goodness of the Supreme Being, to be credible; that he had therefore long been convinced, that those signs of suffering manifested by brute animals, were but means to cherish and promote the sympathies of men, and to check his natural tendency to tyrannize and misuse power, whenever it was granted him. In a word, that he was a sincere disciple and zealous advocate for the doctrine of Gomez Pereira, (which was popularized by Descartes.) who conceived that all appearances of sensibility manifested by animals are fallacious; and that the brute species are mere machines, divested of all feeling.

There is something so amiable in this horror of injustice, that it is impossible not to pardon the

inconsequence of the reasoning. In what is the generally received notion of retributive vengeance, which gratuitously inflicts pain, where neither amendment nor example can be hoped, more consistent with the idea of infinite goodness, than that of the temporal miseries of unoffending brutes? The difficulties surrounding the admitted existence of evil in its simple relation to man, one would think were sufficient, without bringing the brute race into question. It is curious to remark, that the argument for the possible automatic nature of the brute mechanism, is precisely that of the materialists against the existence of the soul; all which is very good as it respects the animal, but, applied to man, is "stark naught;"—a good specimen of the fairness of theologians, which almost drives one on the mythology of Pope's Indian, and makes one wish to take our dog along with us into the regions of immortality.

Father Bougeant, a jesuit, and too much of a jesuit not to see the difficulties of either system, cut the Gordian knot, by stating that brutes were animated by the souls of devils; and one might sometimes be tempted to think so, when a horse will

gib, and a “ pig wont go to market”—when an ass proves as obdurate as Balaam’s, without the same cause—and a crocodile “ puts its hand into its breeches pocket and sheds feigned tears,” after the manner of Sir Boyle’s illustration.

Speaking of an objection that lies against this opinion, drawn from the pleasure men take in the society of animals, the jesuit says, “ If I am told that these poor devils are doomed to suffer eternal torments, I admire God’s decrees, but I have no share in that dreadful sentence. I leave the execution of it to the sovereign judge; and I live with my little devils, as I do with a multitude of people, of whom religion tells me that a great number must be lost.” In this good natured feeling, Bougeant is not singular. Most people have a lurking notion, that they themselves will escape reprobation; and as for their relations and friends, if they will try their chance of going “ the other way, the other way,” as Mr. Moore delicately phrases it, why then, *sauve qui peut*.

In the charitable creed of Mr. Kirwan, I have often been tempted to put faith—after the fashion of St. Augustine, even though it were impossible—

when I have seen the dreadful sufferings inflicted on domestic animals (and in Ireland they are worse treated, than in any other part of the world, in spite of our dear Dick Martin). On such occasions Gomez Pereira, and even the Abbé Bougeant, are often necessary to reconcile one to the spectacle.

From metaphysics and physics, the conversation turned to music. Mr. Kirwan was a devoted amateur of the divine art, which he had studied *con amore*, abroad. He had not, however, got a step further than the “*Coin de la Reine*,” and was as furious against Gluck, and as enamoured of Piccini and Sacchini, as when he assisted to hunt down the “*Titan et l'Aurore*,” of Jean Joseph of Meudonville, in spite of Madame de Pompadour’s patronage of French discords. I was at this time, with respect to Italian music, what St. Preux was before Lord Bomston had discovered the musical bump on his eye-brow, and gave him a new sense. I was so enthusiastic in my passion for Irish music, and had obtained such a pretty little success by playing the airs of Carolan on my Irish harp, that I had actually engaged with Messrs. Power and Golding, of London, to collect and arrange twelve Irish

melodies, with words translated from the Irish, which they brought out shortly afterwards, supplying the idea to Mr. Moore of a similar, though immeasurably superior, publication. I thought, therefore, I would say a little word in favour of my poor *Gramachreces*, *Emunch-a-Knuics*, and other bardic strains, which had, even in infancy, produced the most extraordinary effect on (what is vulgarly called) my nerves. This was worse than Helvetius. Mr. Kirwan called my taste barbarous, and became quite vehement in his expression of abhorrence of Irish music.

“ Madam,” he said, “ I left Ireland at your age; and full, as you now are, of all the vulgar errors of enthusiastic patriotism, I thought there was no poetry like Irish poetry—no music like Irish music. When I returned, I could not endure either. However, at Christmas and other great festivals, I had the servants’ hall, at Cregg, thrown open to all comers, beggars, bards, and story-tellers, after the old Connaught fashion; and at night I took my place in the midst of them, round the blazing hearth, and made my eleemosynary guests each tell a story, recite a poem, or sing a

song, in Irish; and it was amazing how few among them could not recite or sing: and some of them did both right well. It was thus I came at various fragments of Ossian, which Mr. MacPherson has dressed up and changed at pleasure, and assigned to the Scottish bard. But the music was not durable—at least it put my nerves to the torture. Madam, it was quite too much for me—it almost threw me into convulsions."

While he was speaking, I had drawn my harp forward, and begged permission to sing to it the fine old cranon of *Emunch-a-Knuic*, or, " Ned of the Hills," which dates back to the time of Henry VIII. He bowed his head in sullen assent; but before I had finished the first stanza, the tears gushed from his eyes, and seizing my hands, he said with vehemence, " Madam, I wont hear you —'tis terrible—it goes to the very soul!—it wrings every nerve in the body!"

" Then, Sir, I ask no more—the effect which Irish music produces on you is the best proof of its excellency."

" You may as well say that the howl of a dying dog, which would produce much the same effect, is

the proof of its excellence ; my dear child, give up your Irish harp and your Irish howl, and study Italian music—you are worthy of knowing it ! for you have a true musical organization, but it is all perverted. You must take tea with me on Thursday next ; it is my shaving day. I only pay visits, or receive ladies, twice a-week, on my shaving days. I have a good piano-forte, and a fine collection of Italian music ; you shall try both—my tea-table hour is half-past five !”

It happened that on the very evening for which Mr. Kirwan engaged me to take tea at his house in Rutland Square, at half-past five, I had engaged myself to take tea at half-past seven with another celebrated invalid, Mrs. Henry Tighe, the charming Psyche of poetical fame, and my most dear and early friend.

The notes which reminded me of my double and very interesting engagements, lie at this moment before me ; they are extremely characteristic :—

“ Mr. Kirwan presents his best respects to Miss Owenson, and writes to remind her of her kind promise to take tea with him to-morrow evening,

at half past five. She will meet Mr. Hamilton Rowan, and Professor Higgins. Mr. Kirwan will take the liberty to send his carriage for Miss O. at a quarter-past five."

" MY DEAR GLORVINA,

" Lest, in your poetical flights, you should forget to-morrow evening, this is to request you will come early, and bring your best looks and best spirits with you ; the beautiful Lady Charlemont is coming to meet you expressly. Lady Asgil brings Sir Arthur Wellesley,\* and William Parnel joins us as soon as he can—so come. If you would like Harry to go for you, say so.—Your's ever,

" M. TIGHE."

The sober carriage of Mr. Kirwan was at my door to the moment ; and, to the moment, I was at his. My punctuality pleased him ; for his own whole useful and laborious life w<sup>s</sup> governed by a sense of the value of time, and of the virtue of punctuality. I was received by his man, Pope, who seemed born and organized to be the servant of a philosopher—the perfect image of Dumps, the servant of old

\* The Duke of Wellington was then Secretary of State for Ireland.

Rueful, in “The Good Natured Man,” pale, lank, solemn, and demure.

On entering the drawing room, the heat was so excessive, that I was afraid I should never go through the *séance*. Although it was a fine mild spring evening, an enormous fire blazed on the hearth ; and a skreen, of considerable dimensions, drawn closely round it, excluded every breath of air. Within this enclosure, on a large cumbrous sofa, sat the advocate of phlogiston. He was dressed in the same roquelaure and slouched hat, in which he had visited me ; with, however, the addition of a shawl wrapt round his neck. On either side him, were placed two persons, who, in their appearance, seemed to form the extreme links in the human chain. The one was the good and simple Professor Higgins, with his *air de prêtre*, the very *beau-idéal* of a catholic curate, from his own wild native district of Erris ; the other a Roman tribune of Rome’s best day, already indeed past the prime of life, but with the figure of an athlete, and a bust of the antique mould : it was Archibald Hamilton Rowan, who had then but lately returned from his long exile in America. The impression

made on me, by this now best and truest of old friends, has come forth, after a long lapse of years, in my last work, the “O'Briens and the O'Flahertys;” and some resemblance to what he then was may be found in his fine picture by Hamilton.

Over the chimney-piece was a portrait of Catherine of Russia, “whom,” said Mr. Kirwan, “I call Catherine the Great, in contradistinction to Frederick the Infamous, her rival, and by far her inferior.”

Meantime, a conversation, of the most scientific nature, was resumed, which my entrance had interrupted, and in which my ignorance and timidity, at the learned society into which I had been so strangely introduced, prevented me from taking a part.

As soon as Mr. Kirwan had settled the constitution of acids with Professor Higgins, he turned to me, with an air of great gallantry, and said, “Let us now revert to a sweeter subject.” Lord, how I fancied myself Miss Helen Maria Williams, gallanted by Dr. Johnson! After some very civil things, such as young ladies like to hear, even

from old gentlemen (at least I did), he drew up a *précis* of the respective merits of Miss Edgeworth's admirable “Castle Rackrent,” and my “Wild Irish Girl,” very flattering to both. On the exaggeration so unjustly imputed to Miss Edgeworth's most graphic work, he related the following anecdote:—

“ When I first returned to my native province, from abroad, I accepted an invitation to a gentleman's house. After a day's sport on his estate, I arrived late, and found that the house had been burned down the night before.—I was only one of many guests. We had a joyous supper in the roofless hall ; and sheds and temporary sleeping places had been erected for us in the barn, behind the ruined mansion. When we retired for the night, I was led to my pavilion, accompanied by my two favourite dogs, like one of Ossian's hunters. Extremely tired, and, perhaps, not particularly sober, I threw myself on the bed prepared for me, from which I had a distinct view of the stars, through the crevices of the roof. However, I slept soundly, though not uninterruptedly; for, in the middle of the night, I was roused by extraordinary sounds of groaning, and grunting, and squeak-

ings, and squallings, mingled with the sharp bark of one dog, and the low growl of the other, as if in deadly contest with some unwelcome intruder. All that I had then heard of the atrocities of the disturbed state of Ireland rushed to my mind. I started on my legs in search of my fowling piece, but fell over a huge bleeding body, which seemed to give out its last groan under my pressure; my fierce dog, as I supposed, still clinging to the wretch's throat. I called for help—again got upon my legs; and staggering to the entrance, and opening the door, found that I had indeed been attacked, and by the swinish multitude. The fact was, that I had been lodged in the pig-sty, to which the lawful, but extruded proprietors had, by a natural instinct, made their way back in the night; and my faithful dogs, who had in vain striven to repel the invaders, had laid at my feet the mother sow, "with all her pretty little ones," bleeding and vanquished. The scene lay near Ballinoshe; the time was, literally, 'the day after the fair.'"

While this conversation was passing, Pope made tea behind the screen, and served it with a most characteristic formality. The scene was a picture;

and though I afterwards drank tea with Mr. Kirwan fifty times, this first impression was the strongest, and the most lasting. At eight precisely, the party broke up; and Pope conducted me back to the carriage. Before, however, I drove off, he was already employed in unscrewing the knocker :\* for, from that hour, the mansion of the philosopher was hermetically sealed against all intrusion.

The manners, the habits, the accent of Mr. Kirwan, were marked by all those distinctive peculiarities which belonged to his creed, his education, and the country and times in which he flourished. Born in an epoch of Irish story, the most marked, the most heart-rending, under that *régime* of terror, when the worst penal statutes against the catholics were first imposed;—born too, and receiving his first and deepest impressions in a province, poetically and historically the most Irish, he preserved, from the early part of the last

\* To Mr. Kirwan is attributed the story of electrifying his knocker; an excellent hint to persons whose notoriety exposes them to self-interested intruders, who have no claim upon their time and attention.

century to the commencement of the present, the high and formal courtesy, the gallant bearing, and chivalrous point of honour, the broad guttural accent, and the idiomatic phraseology, with which the brave officers who survived the siege of Limerick went forth into voluntary exile, to fight and perish in foreign lands for foreign interests.

His opinions were as singular as his appearance and his manners. Abhorring the atrocities of the fatal re-action, which retarded the benefits and stained the cause of the French Revolution, he was frank and loud in his reprobation of that ruinous continental war by which the British empire was drained and demoralised, to revive pernicious institutions, and restore a race, the antitypes of the unfortunate family which England had herself spurned and dethroned. It was curious to hear him calculate the expenses of this war, and the disbursement which would have been required to build a causeway or pier that should extend across the channel.—“Works,” he said, “of almost equal magnitude had been completed by the ancients, with less aid from science than could now be had. Bonaparte,” he would

add, “would effect works as useful and as sublime, if the old dynasties would let him alone.”

Starting with his favourite maxim, that—“with labour and money nothing is impossible,” he was wont to bring all his wonderful geological knowledge to bear upon this favourite scheme. He tumbled the mountains of Wicklow into St. George’s Channel —played with Bray-head and the Sugar-loaf, as if they were jack-stones,—finished by walking dryshod from Howth to Holyhead, and reckoning his way, not by knots, but by milestones.

His opinion on the antiquity of knowledge was as original as his belief in the mechanism of the brute creation. He asserted that we borrowed much of our astronomical lights from the antediluvians, and that Adam spoke Greek with a purity that might have elicited the applause of the Portico. In his religious opinions he was equally paradoxical; and he remained unsettled upon some leading dogmas to the last, though it has been said of him, “that he died *ferme catholique*, as he had lived *preux chevalier*.” He was extremely fond of female society, and not only invited ladies of all ages to his early tea-parties, but went to theirs; always

stipulating for leave to *bring* and *make* his own tea, and to come and go at his own hours.

The last time I ever saw him was at a tea-party made expressly for himself at my sister's, Lady Clarke's, a few months before his death ; and the company which he upon that occasion drew round him, formed a curious contrast with the grave and learned philosopher who was its centre. It is the misfortune of all the high officials who come to Ireland, that they are, instantly on their arrival, surrounded by a certain heir-loom circle, whose interest it is to keep aloof from the lords of the ascendant the genuine talent and true and independent gentry of the country. Whoever takes the trouble to read the court circular of the Irish dignitaries, will find, that precisely the same persons dine with his excellency Lord B., who dined with his excellency Lord A. ; and so on through the vice-regal alphabet : while commanders-in-chief, and chief commanders, run the same gauntlet, and “*go by the scrip*,” just as their military predecessors did before them.

At a moment when Mr. Kirwan's name and works were familiar to all Europe, and when he

was a fellow of nearly all its learned societies, the fact was utterly unknown to the English officials, military and civil, who then held the *dessus du pavé*, that Dublin was distinguished by the constant residence of one, who did such honour to its literary and scientific annals. Having to plead as an excuse to Sir Charles and Lady Asgill, for a late attendance at their dinner-party, that if I were served up with the game of the second course, it would be because I was first to assist at a tea-party given to Mr. Kirwan, they expressed not only surprise at his residence in Dublin, but an anxious curiosity to be of the tea-party.

Not to take the philosopher by surprise, the proposition was made to him by Lady C—— and myself—and I remember his answer was, “ Madam, I am always pleased to mingle with people of the world. I never knew one, even the lightest and most frivolous, from whom something was not to be learned, that threw a light upon the follies and virtues of society. I once lived much in the world of fashion myself; and was as foolish and as vain as the worst. But I stipulate for my own hours, my own *tay*, and my own *tay-pot*

This being agreed, the party assembled in Lady C.'s drawing-room, at the usual fashionable hour for morning visits. Under the pretence of bringing his staff, Sir Charles Asgill was accompanied by his amiable nephew and A. D. C., Captain Bouverie, and several other young officers; and Lady Asgill smuggled in General and Lady Augusta Leith. In short, the whole 8 o'clock dinner-party of Merion-square were seated at my sister's tea-table before six.

The contrast of the gay and gallant *militaires*, with two or three learned professors who had been invited to meet Mr. Kirwan, and above all with the strange costume and erect posture of the philosopher himself, formed a pleasant picture. It was very evident, that there was a previous inclination on the part of the fashionables towards mystification; and that a very active system of quizzing had been organized by the two *grandes dames de par le monde*, in which every beau present was to have played his part—(within, however, be it acknowledged, the bounds of perfect good breeding,—a virtue never transgressed with impunity in the society of the polished and cour-

teous Sir Charles Asgill). It happened, however, in this instance, (as I have known it happen in a hundred others, when genuine talent is brought to stand the brunt of that frivolous *persiflage*, in which fashion delights and exults,) that those who came to scoff, remained — to admire. Unconsciously led on to talk, by the insidious propositions of the mystifiers, to whom his charming, unadulterated brogue was a feast, he gradually dilated into the most communicative pleasantry. His ever anecdotic mine was opened to its richest abundance; and so full of interest, novelty, and information, was his discourse, that even appetite stood in check while he spoke; and Mr. Kirwan, (whose tea was his supper,) was the first to give notice to his delighted listeners, that it was time for them to go to dinner.

Like all people of eminent talent, Mr. Kirwan was extremely *naïve*; and, where his feelings gave the impulse, he seldom “stood on the order” of form, or of cold discretion. At that deplorable period which preceded the rebellion, when a gentleman of the highest respectability, of large fortune and of ancient family, was imprisoned, tried, and condemned, for a libel on the nefarious government of those times,

it entered into the littleness of the Irish Secretary of State to refine upon the severity of punishment, by adding to it the indelible stain of disgrace:—in a word, it was intended to place a member of a noble family, a man of the highest character, in the pillory. When the intelligence was communicated to Mr. Kirwan, his emotion is said to have been extreme; and ordering his carriage, he instantly drove to the castle—pushed by the familiars who filled the ante-room of the Secretary of State's office, and bolting into the presence of the arbitrator of a nation's fate, demanded if what he had heard was true? A placid and rather affirmative smile, was the equivocal and somewhat contemptuous answer. After a moment's indignant pause, Mr. Kirwan, drawing up his figure to its full height, in his broadest brogue and deepest tones, said—“Sir, if this unfortunate gentleman is guilty of high treason, bring him to the scaffold; if of a libel against your government, fine and confine him: but if you send such a personage to the pillory, you will revolt the whole order of gentlemen throughout Europe against you.”—The *order of gentlemen* was, in Mr. Kirwan's estimation, the first order in the

world ; and none better illustrated its pervading spirit than himself.

The long and truly paternal kindness, with which Mr. Kirwan honoured me, from the moment of our first acquaintance till his death, I consider as among the proudest circumstances of my life. When the first attack was made on me, in the first number of the Quarterly, he was nearly as indignant as when Mr. \* \* \* was threatened with the pillory—not more through his partiality to me, than through the disgrace it might inflict on the "*order of gentlemen,*" should any one suppose a gentleman capable of so unmeasured an attack upon a young and defenceless woman.

He was extremely desirous, at that epoch, that I should write a prize essay for a premium, offered by the Dublin University, for the best essay on Literary Fiction. I wrote my essay—but it was not a *prize* one. It was my first and last attempt at writing "to order," and was undertaken, against my taste and will, merely to please him. Having found it some years back, I gave it to Mr. Colburn for the "*Literary Gazette,*" at that time under his direction.

The last letter which I had the honour to receive from Mr. Kirwan, a short time before his death, is extremely characteristic of that high tone of courtesy which he always assumed with women ; and it is remarkable for the perfect intellect it displayed, even when its gifted writer was dropping into the grave :—

“ DEAR MADAM,

“ I received your letter about three weeks ago ; and your present, which does me so much honour, about a week ago : but I cannot say that your letter gave me any pleasure, as it announced your intention of speedily departing from this country.

“ Allowing you to do so, is indeed an accumulated proof how little it is worthy of the praises you bestowed upon it. Sentiments corresponding with your own, are now to be found only among those of genuine Irish origin, who now, alas ! constitute the lowest class in the wretched population of the western coast of Connaught—despised and persecuted for nearly three centuries ; though you will probably be rendered much more happy, by absence from a scene which would daily afflict a

heart of such exquisite sensibility as your own—a sensibility which, I must say, among your numerous accomplishments, forms the essence of your character.

“ It will, I hope, if report says true, be engrossed by a person worthy of its selection, who in return will derive his happiness from repaying it by equal constancy and intensity.

“ This is the ardent hope of your faithful friend,  
and most affectionate humble servant,

“ R. KIRWAN.

“ *Dublin, January 25th, 1812* ”

### TRÈS-DISTINGUÉ.

Who would think that this prevailing term in the nomenclature of modern fashionable jargon is as old as the time of Ninon de l'Enclos, for whom it was invented? Love had already taken shelter in her wrinkles,\* and intrenched himself

\* “ L'amour,” said the Abbé Chaulieu, “ s'étoit retiré jusque dans les rides de son front.”

behind her spectacles ; and there was still found about her a charm for which there was no name, which the old triumphed to observe, and the young could neither resist nor define. They at last called it something *distingué*. In one of her clever letters to St. Evremont, speaking of a young friend he had presented to her, she says :—

*“ J’ai lu devant lui votre lettre, avec des lunettes ; mais elles ne me siécent pas mal ; j’ai toujours eu la mine grave. S’il est amoureux du mérite qu’on appelle ici distingué, peut-être que votre souhait sera accompli : car tous les jours on vient me consoler de mes pertes par ce beau mot.”\**

\* “ I read your letter before him, and in spectacles ; but they become me pretty well. I have always had a grave look. If he is in love with that merit which is here called *distingué*, your wish may perhaps be accomplished. Every day I am consoled for my lost attractions by this fine phrase.”

## AUX PETITS SOINS.

*Petits soins!* *Alte là,* my dear little women, coquettes, prudes, and platonists ; and you who are none of these, but have just philosophy enough at the ends of your rosy fingers, to prefer that pleasant series of intellectual sensations, which come of the *petits soins* of an agreeable and clever man, with all their imaginative enjoyments, which are followed neither by satiety nor remorse, but are yet far removed from a “cool suspense from pleasure and from pain.”

French women understand this gracious era in the progress of a “*sentiment*,” much better than the English. They have the prudence to put off the evil day, when it shall be no more, as long as they can ; and they have the wit and information to fill up the interval between growing prepossession, and unequivocal passion. They have a still more precious art—that of inspiring *les petits soins*,

when *les grands* have passed for ever. In England, indifference treads closely on the steps of love—in France, the most lasting and tender friendship is made up of the fragments of an old passion.

## RAPIDITY.

“ You sleep so slow, Father.”

*Young Rapid—Cure for the Heart Ache.*

I CANNOT get on with Mr. ——: not but he is a sensible and a clever man; but then, in thought, delivery, and enunciation, he is so slow!—We start together fairly from the same point, and gain the same end; but he goes by the heavy Birmingham, and I am booked by the mail. One of the great characteristics of modern times is rapidity. A slow development, is in all things, either an evidence of the timidity of ignorance, or a proof of inefficiency and feebleness. This is particularly illustrated in the science of music. The earliest musical compositions which have reached us, are dragging, drawling, monotonous chaunts. Even the “ *Char-*

*mante Gabriele*" of *Henri Quatre*, and the cava-  
tinas by Salvator Rosa, resemble a modern psalmody.

From Sacchini to Rossini, (no very great inter-  
val, by the by) the successive changes in music are  
all characterized by increasing rapidity. Rossini  
condenses into a single bar musical ideas, which the  
masters of the last century would have extended  
through many phrases. The reiteration, which  
occurs in the grounds of Purcell, Corelli, &c. &c.,  
is a result of the same cause: one idea in these  
compositions makes the whole *frise* of the piece,  
and is husbanded and worked like a geometrical  
problem. The compositions of Rossini form an  
epoch in the history of the most delicious of arts.  
Rossini is the Voltaire of music. He has given it  
an impulsion, which the world was ready to receive,  
but which no preceding composer had the genius  
or the courage to propose. Paesiello, his prede-  
cessor, was the Rousseau of his art. Full of sen-  
timent and eloquence, he was deficient in that  
force of truth, that energetic vigour of conception,  
which irresistibly masters the passions of the au-  
ditor. We sleep with soft dreams in listening to  
Paesiello; but we are awakened by Rossini.

People must have spoken more slowly in the time of Queen Elizabeth, than they do now. The cumbrous construction of phrases in the written style of that day, obliges one to read the page of an old author much slower than a modern one. It must have been the same in conversation: there being then fewer ideas in general circulation, the speaker had further to seek for subject matter: the words did not “come skipping rank and file.” There was no ready money of mind in the market, although there were immense masses of unworked ingot, lying in the great bank of the national intellect. There was not then, as now, a ready-made set of conventional phrases, which served to dress up every man’s thoughts, and often to supply the place of thinking; every man was then his own thinker. A rapid speaker, in such a state of things, must have cutstripped his hearers. “In all kinds of speech,” (says Lord Bacon) “either pleasant, grave, severe, or ordinary, it is convenient to speak leisurely, and rather drawlingly, than hastily; because hasty speech confounds the memory, and oftentimes, beside the unseemliness, draws a man either to stammering, a

nonplus, or harping on that which should follow ; whereas a slow speech confirmeth the memory, and addeth a conceit of wisdom to the hearers,—besides a seemliness of speech and countenance." Here then was the *beau-ideal* of a good speaker in the time of Queen Elizabeth.

One of the most satisfactory evidences of improvement in the details of civilized life, is the increased rapidity of all its movements. Rapidity is power—omnipotence goes at once to its object, and reaches it. To be slow is to be feeble—to measure human action against time, and to overtake it, is to double existence. To live fast (properly understood) is not to wear out life briefly, but to multiply the sensations which extend it. The more thought, action, intellect, and sensation, can be crammed into this "petty space," the longer we live : for it is not years, but the consciousness of living, that gives the true longevity.

"Mourir, sans avoir vécu,"

is therefore the fate of the whole tortoise tribe, whether in or out of their shell.

The events of the American and French re-

volutions have quadrupled the existence of the generation which witnessed them. More has been done in the last century, than in any three centuries which preceded it.

By rapidity, however, is not intended that description of haste, which is proverbially said to make the worst speed. That which is done imperfectly will require more time to mend, than, if properly bestowed, would have been consumed in its original completion ; and as imperfect objects are objects not adapted to their end, to employ them in that state, occasions an equal waste of time in the business of life. The merit of the rapidity of civilization is, that it is combined with a greater perfection in the arts and sciences.

We travel over Macadamized roads, and sail in steam vessels, not only quicker, but safer and more comfortably. The modern speaker is not only more rapid, but clearer, and less exposed to fallacy. Society begins its progress, like life, feebly and slowly ; the human intellect develops itself in ponderous poems, of a thousand and one cantos, essays in folios, and “ hints,” in quarto. Journeys, in the infancy of society, are made in moving

houses, over trackless mountains and “crack-skull commons,” at the rate of ten miles per day.

“Slow and sure,” was a maxim of the wisdom of our ancestors; and (to end with the pleasant farce whence I took the motto for the head of this rapid rhapsody) “keep moving,” should be the epigraph of ours. The “*en avant*” of Bonaparte set all the old dynasties in a bustle; and but for the whip and the spur, and the “*allez, allez,*” of the French Revolution, we should have their absoluteisms still moving their “*minuet de la Lorraine.*” They have been taught to dance in quicker time, since that important *pas grave* nearly caused a war in which half Europe was to have taken a part.

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## MY FIRST ROUT IN LONDON.

OF all metaphysical mysteries, there is nothing more difficult to get at than the mystery of memory. Montaigne, complaining of his, observes, “*et suis si excellente en oublie, que mes escripts mèmes, je les oublie, pas moins que les autres.*”\* This is precisely my own case. I never could remember anything I wrote, beyond the moment when it was going through the press. The other evening I found a book lying open on the piano-forte, which somebody had just laid down, on being called to take a part in the *Preghiera* in the opera of the *Mosè*, and I chanced to light upon a high-flown and rather nonsensical passage, of which I could make nothing. This induced me to look at the title-page. It was “the Wild Irish Girl,” seventh edition. I had not seen it for years. I was amused, and a little surprised.

In *diebus illis*, it was with my style, pretty

\* “And I am myself so excellent at forgetfulness, that I forget my own works as much as those of other persons.”

much as with the oaths of Frère Jean de l'Entommeures—“*Comment, vous jurez, Frère Jean?*” “*Ce n'est (dit le moine) que pour orner mon langage : ces sont couleurs de rhétorique Cicéronienne.*”\* All, that literary counsel, acquirement, and instruction give to literary composition, was, in my early career of authorship, utterly denied me. The imagination, or feeling, or whatever it was, that carried the “Wild Irish Girl” through seven editions in less than two years, was wholly unsupported by any of the advantages which reading, the world, society, or the judgment and taste they bring with them, could confer. I began to write almost as soon as I could read ; and the premature development of imagination, which enabled me to combine and invent, was inevitably destitute of that command of language, which books and reflection only give. Hurried on by the “thick-coming fancies” of a fervid but uncultivated mind, I did not always pause to secure the best and most precise expression by which they could be conveyed ; and except when I had to give utterance to some strong

\* “ You swear, Friar ? It is only for ornament. These are the colours of Ciceronian rhetoric.”

feeling, (for feeling always finds its own language,) I was often, as the sportsman's phrase is, "at fault." Conscious of the poverty of my vocabulary, I frequently borrowed a word, or adopted a phrase, as Frère Jean did an oath, not for its precise application or intrinsic meaning, but simply "*pour orner mon langage.*"

I remember once making this humble and plenary confession under very singular circumstances, and with a most propitiating effect. It was on the occasion of my first appearance at a great London rout, and at the moment when the uncalculated success of the juvenile work alluded to, had given me that sort of vogue which learned pigs, and learned ladies, and other things more valuable for their singularity than their utility, enjoy in common.

A few days after my arrival in London, and while my little book was running rapidly through successive editions, I was presented to the Countess Dowager of C——k, and invited to a rout at her fantastic and pretty mansion in New Burlington-street. Oh, how her Irish historical name tingled on my ears, and seized on my

imagination ; as that of her great ancestor, "the father of chemistry, and uncle to Lord Cork," did on the mind of my old friend, Professor Higgens. I was freshly launched from the bogs of the barony of Tireragh, in the province of Connaught, and had dropped at once into the very sanctuary of English *ton*, without time to go through the necessary course of training in manners or millinery, for such an awful transition : so, with no *chaperon* but my incipient notoriety, and actually no toilet but the frock and the flower in which, not many days before, I had danced a jig, on an earthen floor, with an O'Rourke, prince of Brefney, in the county of Leitrim, I stepped into my job-carriage at the hour of ten, and, " all alone by myself"—as the Irish song says—

" To Eden took my solitary way."

What added to my fears, and doubts, and hopes, and embarrassments, was a note from my noble hostess, received at the moment of departure, which ran thus :—

" Every body has been invited expressly to

meet the Wild Irish Girl : so she must bring her Irish harp.

“ M. C. O.”

I arrived at New Burlington-street without my Irish harp, and with a beating heart ; and I heard the high-sounding titles of princes and ambassadors, and dukes and duchesses, announced, long before my own poor plebeian Hibernian name puzzled the porter, and was bandied from footman to footman, as all names are bandied, which are not written down in the red-book of Fashion, nor rendered familiar to the lips of her insolent menials. How I wished myself back in Tireragh with my own princes, the O's and Macs ; and yet this position was among the items of my highest ambition ! To be sought after by the great, not for any accidental circumstance of birth, rank, or fortune, but simply “ *pour les beaux yeux de mon mérite*,” was a principal item in the utopia of my youthful fancy. I endeavoured to recall the fact to mind ; but it would not do : and as I ascended the marble stairs, with their gilt balustrade, I was agitated by emotions, similar to those which drew

from my countryman, Maurice Quill,\* his frank exclamation in the heat of the battle of Vittoria, “ Oh, Jasus, I wish some one of my greatest enemies was kicking me down Dame-street !”

Lady C——k met me at the door of that suite of apartments which opens with a brilliant boudoir, and terminates with a sombre conservatory, where eternal twilights fall upon fountains of rose-water which never dry, and on beds of flowers which never fade,—where singing birds are always silent, and butterflies are for once at rest.

“ What, no harp, Glorvina ?” said her ladyship.

“ Oh, Lady C—— !”

“ Oh, Lady Fiddlestick !—you are a fool, child ; you don’t know your own interests. Here, James, William, Thomas, send one of the chairmen to Stanhope-street, for Miss Owenson’s harp.”

Led on by Doctor Johnson’s celebrated “ little Dunce,” and Boswell’s “ *divine Maria*,” who kindly and protectingly drew my arm through hers, I was at

\* Maurice Quill, the Sir John Falstaff of the Irish troops, during the Peninsular war, who assigned as a reason for entering into the 71st regiment (I believe) his desire to be near his brother, who was in the 72d. His personal circumspection was said to be merely assumed, as a medium for his humour.

once merged into that mob of *élégantes* and *élégants*, who always prefer narrow door-ways for incipient flirtations, to the clear stage and fair play of the centre of a salon. As we stood wedged on the threshold of fashion, my dazzled eyes rested for a moment, on a strikingly sullen-looking handsome creature, whose boyish person was distinguished by an air of singularity, which seemed to vibrate between hauteur and shyness. He stood with his arms crossed, and alone, occupying a corner near the door ; and though in the brilliant bustling crowd, was “ not of it.”

“ How do, Lord Byron ?” said a pretty sprite of fashion, as she glided her spirituality through a space, which might have proved too narrow for one of Leslie Forster’s demi-semi souls to pass through.

Lord Byron ! All “ *les braves Bîrons* ” of French and English chivalry rushed to my mind, at the sound of the historical name ! But I was then ignorant, that its young and beautiful inheritor was to give it greater claims on the admiration of posterity, than the valiant *preux* of France, or the loyal cavaliers of England, had yet bestowed on it. For fame travels slowly in our Barony of Tireragh ;

and though Lord Byron had already made his first step in that career which ended in the triumph of his brilliant and powerful genius over all his cotemporaries, I had got no further in the article *Byron*, than the “*pends-toi, brave Biron,*” of *Henri Quatre*.

After a stand and a stare of some seconds, I was pushed on—and, on reaching the centre of the conservatory, I found myself suddenly pounced upon a sort of rustic seat by Lady C——k, whose effort to detain me on this very uneasy pre-eminence, resembled Lingo’s remonstrance of “keep your temper, great Rusty-fusty;” for I too was treated *en princesse*, (the Princess of *Coolavin*), and denied the civilized privileges of sofa or chair, which were not in character with the habits of a “Wild Irish Girl.” So, there I sat, “*patience per force with wilful choler meeting,*” the lioness of the night! exhibited and shewn off like “the beautiful hyena that never was tamed,” of Exeter Change,—looking almost as wild, and feeling quite as savage!

Lady C——k, whose parties are the pleasantest in London, because they are exempt from the mono-

tony which broods like an incubus over the circles of English fashion, has been accused of an inordinate passion for lions. In my own respect I have only to say, that this *engouement*, indulged, in the first instance, perhaps, a little too much at my expense, has been followed up by nearly twenty years of unswerving friendship, kindness, and hospitality.

I shall never forget the cordiality with which, upon this memorable occasion, she presented me to all that was then most illustrious for rank and talent in England; even though the manner savoured, perhaps, something too much of the Duchess de la Ferte's style of protection, on a similar occasion, “*Allons, Mademoiselle, parlez - vous allez voir comme elle parle;*” for if the manner was not exactly conformable to the dignity of the Princess of Coolavin, the motive rendered ~~all~~ excusable, and I felt with the charming *protégée* of the French duchess, that “so many whimsical efforts proceeded merely from an immoderate desire to bring me forward.”

Presenting me to each and all of the splendid crowd, which an idle curiosity, easily excited,

and as soon satisfied, had gathered round us, she prefaced every introduction with a little exordium, which seemed to amuse every one but its subject. “Lord Erskine, this is the ‘Wild Irish Girl,’ whom you were so anxious to know. I assure you, she talks quite as well as she writes. Now, my dear, do tell my Lord Erskine some of those Irish stories, you told us the other evening at Lord C——ville’s. Fancy yourself *en petit comité*, and take off the Irish brogue. Mrs. Abington says you would make a famous actress, she does indeed! You must play the short-armed orator with her; she will be here by and by. This is the Duchess of St. A——, she has your ‘Wild Irish Girl’ by heart. Where is Sheridan? Do, my dear Mr. T——; (this is Mr. T——, my dear—Geniuses should know each other)—do, my dear Mr. T——, find me Mr. Sheridan. Oh! here he is! what! you know each other already; *tant mieux*. This is Lord Carysfort. Mr. Lewis, do come forward; that is Monk Lewis, my dear, of whom you have heard so much—but you must not read his works, they are very naughty.” But here is one, whose works I know you have read. What,

you know him too!" It was the Hon. William Spenser, whose "Year of Sorrow" was then drawing tears from all the brightest eyes in England; while his wit and his pleasantry cheered every circle he distinguished by his presence.

Lewis, who stood staring at me through his eye-glass, backed out at this exhibition, and disappeared. "Here are two ladies," continued her ladyship, "whose wish to know you is very flattering, for they are wits themselves, *l'esprit de Mortemar*, true N——'s. You don't know the value of this introduction. You know Mr. Gell, so I need not present you. He calls you the Irish Corinne. Your friend Mr. Moore will be here by and by. I have collected "all the talents" for you. Do see, somebody, if Mr. Kemble and Mrs. Siddons are come yet; and find me Lady Hamilton. Now pray tell us the scene at the Irish baronet's, in the rebellion, that you told to the ladies of Llangollen; and then give us your blue stocking dinner, at Sir Richard Phillips's; and describe us the Irish priests. Here is your countryman, Lord L——k, he will be your bottle holder."

Lord L——k volunteered his services. The circle

now began to widen—wits, warriors, peers, and ministers of state. The harp was brought forward, and I attempted to play; but my howl was funeral; I was ready to cry in character, but endeavoured to laugh, and to cover out my real timidity by an affected ease, which was both awkward and impolite. The best coquetry of the young and inexperienced is a frank exhibition of its own unsophisticated feelings—but this is a secret learned too late.

A ball at Mrs. Hope's drew off my auditory, and towards midnight, the ring was thinned to a select few, some fifty particular friends, who had been previously asked to stay supper. It was my good fortune to be placed at table between Lords Erskine and Cary-fort, who had both been particularly kind to me during my périlous probation; and now, no longer “the observed of all observers,” I had leisure to observe for myself, and to be amused in my turn.

I had got into a very delightful conversation with my veteran beaux, when Mr. Kemble was announced. Lady C——k reproached him as “the late Mr. Kemble;” and then, looking significantly

at me, told him who I was. Kemble, to whom I had been already presented by Mrs. Lefanu, acknowledged me by a kindly nod ; but the intense stare which succeeded, was not one of mere recognition. It was the glazed, fixed look, so common to those who have been making libations to altars which rarely qualify them for ladies' society. Mr. Kemble was evidently much pre-occupied, and a little exalted ; and he appeared actuated by some intention, which he had the will, but not the power, to execute. He was seated *vis-à-vis*, and had repeatedly raised his arm, and stretched it across the table, for the purpose, as I supposed, of helping himself to some boar's-head in jelly. Alas, no !—the bore was, that my head happened to be the object which fixed his tenacious attention ; and which being a true Irish *cathah* head, dark, cropped, and curly, struck him as a particularly well organized Brutus, and better than any in his *répertoire* of theatrical pe.akes. Succeeding at last in his feline and fixed purpose, he actually struck his claws in my locks, and addressing me in the deepest sepulchral tones, asked—" Little girl, where did you buy your wig ?"

Lord Erskine "came to the rescue," and liberated my head.

Lord Carysfort exclaimed, to retrieve the awkwardness of the scene, "*les serpents de l'envie ont sifflés dans son cœur;*" on every side—

" Some did laugh,  
And some did say, God bless us;"

—while I, like Macbeth—

" Could not say, Amen."

Meantime Kemble, peevish, as half tipsy people generally are, and ill brooking the interference of the two peers, drew back, muttering and fumbling in his coat-pocket, evidently with some dire intent lowering in his eyes. To the amusement of all, and to my increased consternation, he drew forth a volume of the "Wild Irish Girl," (which he had brought to return to Lady C——k) and, reading, with his deep, emphatic voice, one of the most high-flown of its passages, he paused, and patting the page with his fore-finger, with the look of Hamlet addressing Polonius, he said, "Little girl, why did you write such nonsense? and where did you get all these d——d hard words?"

Thus taken by surprise, and “smarting with my wounds” of mortified authorship, I answered, unwittingly and witlessly, the truth : “Sir, I wrote as well as I could, and I got the hard words out of Johnson’s dictionary.”

The eloquence of Erskine himself would have pleaded my cause with less effect ; and the “*J'y allois*” of *La Fontaine* was not quoted with more approbation in the circles of Paris, than the *naïveté* of my equally veracious and spontaneous reply. The triumph of my simplicity did not increase Kemble’s good humour ; and, shortly after, Mr. Spenser carried him off in his carriage, to prevent any further attacks on my unfortunate head—inside or out.

Talking over this scene, not long since, at Lady C——k’s, with a lady who had been present, it came back with all its circumstances to my memory, and with a keen recollection of the pains and penalties incidental to inexperienced and unprotected female youth, when forced by necessity to step across the threshold of domestic privacy, and to carry to the mart of public suffrage the feeling and fancy, intended by nature for home

consumption. Between my first and my last appearance in the elegant and hospitable salons of New Burlington-street, what a difference!—in person, feeling, sensations, intellect,—the all that should make identity, yet does not! I cannot trace the least similitude between Mr. Kemble's “little girl,” and the proscribed of emperors and the excommunicated of popes. There is more philosophy in the little woman who went “to market her eggs for to sell,” than the world is aware of: and I have been tempted to quote her “Lord have mercy on me! *sure this is none of I?*” as often as my illustrious countryman Daniel O'Connell has applied to his own Ireland his favourite quotation of

Great glorious, and free,  
Firstflow'r of the ocean, first gem of the sea.”

I have repeated it, when telling a droll Irish story to the minister who had set his seal to Ireland's ruin; in the Tuileries, when I stood face to face, “bandying compliments with majesty;” in the Quirinal, when in *tête-à-tête* with a cardinal secretary, amid scenes that belonged to the middle ages;

in the Palace Borghese with the family of Napoleon Bonaparte ; on the Pontine Marshes, when receiving the confessions of a Carmelite monk, on his pilgrimage to the shrine of St. Peter ; and in the vice-regal circles of Dublin Castle, when a liberal Lord Lieutenant shook my right hand, at the same moment that a grand master of an orange lodge shook my left !

I remember relating my *début* at Lady C——k's, and my scene with Mr. Kemble, to the late Marquess of A——, as something more true than possible. He told me that he had known him to do things more eccentric, when under the influence of that *one* glass too much ; and he quoted an anecdote which occurred at the —. “ Kemble was seated between the two Scotch Dukes of H——, and of A—— ; the conversation turned on genealogy, and the two peers grew warm upon the relative antiquity of their houses. Kemble, who had not drunk pending the argument, and who saw with despair the bottle in abeyance between their graces, after muttering his impatience for some time, broke out on a sudden with, ‘ D—— both your bloods, send round the wine !’ Nobody,” added Lord A——, “ appeals to Kemble sober against Kemble

tipsy—he is such an excellent fellow, and such a perfect gentleman."

Perhaps no actor of any age or country (Garrick excepted) lived upon such intimate and equal terms with the great, as Kemble. There was such a natural patent of gentility about him, that the highest nobility of the land gave way to it. He and Talma were the last of their class and caste. Not but that there are now as perfect gentlemen on the stage as ever: but the heroic age of the theatre is over. For me, as long as Potier and Perlet, and Liston, remain, *je ne demande pas mieux*. I would rather laugh with Falstaff, than shudder with Macbeth; and with respect to French tragedy and French declamation, I am just where I was, when I wrote "France." Notwithstanding all the "*Lettres adressées à Mi Lady Morgan,*" to prove that she is a blockhead and knows nothing of the matter, she at least knows what amuses and what bores her—and all she has done, is to say so.

To observe of any gentleman, now, that he drank, would be to utter a disgraceful reproach. Yet, up to the last quarter of the century, the male nobility and even royalty of Great Britain, gave themselves

up to ineptitude; so that to be “as drunk as a lord,” was, in reality, a patrician distinction. Charles the Second was frequently seen reeling to his home in Whitehall, through the streets of London, in the midst of his brawling riotous courtiers, with “the fiddles” in his van, to serenade the Duchess of Portsmouth, on his return from “poor Nelly’s” lodgings.

In more recent and refined times, modern Falstaffs, and Heirs Apparent, have had their “Boar’s Heads,” as favourite resorts, though not in Cheap-side. Hereditary legislators and representatives of the people, have staggered home together in the neighbourhood of St. Stephen’s—and the representative of majesty itself, lying under his own dinner-table, has given rise to the Catholic witicism of a great law officer, who observed, that “the *Host* wanted elevation.” Even in times still fresh in the memories of many, sobriety was deemed a suspicious virtue, as well as a vulgar one; and to be a seven-bottle-man, was to qualify for the highest society. But where, now, is the nobleman or gentleman, who would not shrink from such a reputation? School of the

sticklers for the good old times, and for the wisdom of our ancestors—you, who place the excesses of intemperance among the social virtues—what say you to the sobriety of the present generation?

## LORD ERSKINE.

Poor Lord Erskine! how the memory of the first odd and pleasant evening which introduced me to the distinction of his notice, refreshes all my after remembrance of his unchanging kindness, from the moment that we met in Lady C——k's conservatory, until within a few weeks of his death. Among the brightest, and often *falsest* illusions of our youth, are the ideas we conceive of eminent persons, of whom we have long read and heard. I could write volumes on the impressions which I received in my early and obscure youth, of the eminent and the celebrated, whose names had danced before my eyes, or tingled in my ears, in books and news-papers, in rumeurs and reports; and of the disappointment which followed, when my own notoriety brought me within their sphere.

The first time I read of Lord Erskine was in Miss Seward's works. What a splendid picture of humanity, for one whose imagination, like the style of the fair author whose pages she gloated over, was all exaggeration and effervescence ! Oh ! how very much in love I then was with the *idea* of Lord Erskine !

A little further on in life, I met with an old pamphlet, in the parlour window of a country house, and found it was the famous trial of Horne Tooke. The speech of Lord Erskine revived my early and warm impressions of that splendid person ; and he of whom it had been said that “he had spoken on that momentous occasion like a man inspired, and at once redeemed the honour of his profession, and established the safety of his country,” was to me just that sort of person, whom to behold but for a moment, I would have made a pilgrimage bare-footed from Tipperary (where I then was) to any given spot which he inhabited.

I met Lord Erskine, therefore, under these exaggerated notions of his genius and character ; and was a little disappointed to find that he spoke like other persons—was a thin, middle-aged gentleman,

and wore a brown wig. This was not exactly the impersonation of my *beau-ideal!* Genius was then with me a mode of being, splendid in its form as in its spirit. Already a little disabused, I yet could not reconcile myself to inspiration in a bob-wig. Still it was a great epoch in my life, when I found myself seated by one of the gods of my idolatry—for I then had a great many; and worshipped a sort of polytheism of prepossession, which kept me in a constant alternation of hope and disappointment:—my gods being too frequently false gods, and my golden idols, images of clay. It was a still more flattering distinction, when his lordship called on me, the day after our introduction, at Lady C——'s.

From that time, till his death, we met frequently, and corresponded occasionally; just seeing enough of each other, to become intimate with nothing but our respective good qualities. He was always delightful, always amusing, frequently incoherent—and, I thought, sometimes affectedly wild, at least paradoxical. Of this, an instance occurs to me, connected with an important epoch, and with some amusing scenes, *que voilà*:

It was during that grand political æra—the very hegira of ratting—when the Prince of Wales, becoming regent, left it a moment in doubt whether the old ministry would join the whig sovereign, or the whig sovereign adopt the sentiments of the tory ministers. I was then enjoying my brilliant existence, at that Alhambra of fashion, and of ministerial politics, the P—— at St——re. The noble owner of that hospitable mansion was an aristocrat in feeling and a tory in principle. The blood of the Stuarts ran in his veins; the beauty of the Darnley and the hauteur of the Bothwell were the characteristics of his distinguished person. He was so organized to be the man he was, that no education nor example could have made him otherwise. Had he occupied the throne of his ancestors, he would have been the justest despot that ever reigned; for though he loved power much, he loved truth more;—and truth is—justice. Lord A—— was a frank, aboveboard, and uncompromising politician. His pride, with which he was reproached as a vice, was his virtue. It rendered him untractable to the meanness of manœuvre, intrigue, and

corruption. His opinions were in such perfect coincidence with his interest, that his marquisate and blue ribbon were not the rewards of a purchased conformity, but testimonials of ministerial good will, for voluntary and independent services, conscientiously rendered ; and much as he was said to have loved such distinctions, I am sure he would rather have resigned the title and the garter, than have changed sides, or given up any cause he deemed to be based in justice.

From Saturday till Monday, (the weekly interval of public business,) was always a carnival at the P—, when the upper and lower houses seemed to send their most distinguished members to recreate in its elegant *salons*. The first Saturday after the appointment of the Regent brought down a multitude of visitors, the *élite* of the statesmen and stateswomen of both parties. Among these were Lord Erskine and the Duchess of G—. It was my good fortune to be seated on a sofa with Lord Erskine, when the duchess did us the honour to make a third in our conversation. “Oh, my lord,” she said, “you ha’ got the Wild Irish Girl all to yourself. Weel, she’s a clever

creature, but I've a great fault to find with her. She has no more sentiment than a London Missy ! The first time I met her was at the Irish chancellor's. Jannie M—— and I had been living among the heaths and the roses of Glengary, and had been gloating on her ‘Wild Irish Girl’ and ‘Novice;’ and when I arrived in Dublin I was longing to know her. Weel, Lord M—— made a dinner expressly. But, what was my disappointment when she said, ‘Oh ! Lord M——, think how unlucky I am. The very day I left B—— C——, a whole jaunting car of officers were expected from Strabane.’ Eh ! gude God, there was sentiment with a vengeance.”

This brought on the chapter of romance, national peculiarities, fetches, second-sights, &c. &c. ; in the latter of which, both Lord E. and the duchess acknowledged their belief. I could not avoid expressing some surprise that such persons should give way to the influence of such irrational superstition. The duchess was displeased, and said, “I don’t like to see young ladies setting themselves above their superiors, and giving in to free thinking. I never knew any one cry down

what is called superstition, but those who have no religion."

It was in vain that "I rose to explain." Prostration of intellect, and profound obedience in the young and inexperienced, were the order of the day; and her grace related a very curious and romantic tale of second-sight in her own family, which amused, if it did not convert me—while the affecting manner in which it was told, left no doubt as to the sincerity of the relator.

"I also," said Lord Erskine, "believe in second-sight, because I have been its subject. When I was a very young man, I had been for some time absent from Scotland. On the morning of my arrival in Edinburgh, as I was descending the steps of a close, on coming out from a bookseller's shop, I met our old family butler. He looked greatly changed, pale, wan, and shadowy, as a ghost. 'Eh! old boy,' I said, 'what brings you here?' He replied, 'To meet your honour, and solicit your interference with my lord, to recover a sum, due to me, which the steward at our last settlement did not pay.' Struck by his looks and manner, I bade him follow me to the bookseller's,

into whose shop I stepped back ; but when I turned round to speak to him, he had vanished.

“ I remembered that his wife carried on some little trade in the old town. I remembered even the house and the flat she occupied, which I had often visited in my boyhood. Having made it out, I found the old woman in widow’s mourning. Her husband had been dead for some months ; and had told her on her death-bed, that my father’s steward had wronged him of some money, but that when Master Tom returned, he would see her righted. This I promised to do, and shortly after, fulfilled my promise. The impression was indelible ; and I am extremely cautious how I deny the possibility of such ‘supernatural visitings’ as those which your grace has just instanced in your own family.”

Either Lord Erskine did, or did not, believe this strange story ; if he did, what a strange aberration of intellect !—if he did not, what a stranger aberration from truth ! My opinion is, that he *did* believe it. I had not, however, then learned upon what trifling points human credulity turns, how little even our opinions are our own, and how far

the strongest minds are inconsistent with themselves, and obstinately retain the dog's-ears and folds of early impression.

Notwithstanding my heresy in the matter of second-sight, I continued to receive marks of friendship from Lord E.; and for years after my marriage, he sent me any thing he produced in a literary way. The following note, which was written a few months before his death, closed our correspondence; it was accompanied by his pamphlet on the Greeks. It is worth citing, as a testimony to prove that years do not make age, and that freshness of feeling, and youthful ardour in a great cause, may survive the corporeal decay, which time never spares, even to protracted sensibility:—

“ DEAR LADY MORGAN,

“ A long time ago, in one of your works (all of which I have read with great satisfaction), I remember your having expressed your approbation of my style of writing, and a wish that I would lose no occasion of rendering it useful. I wish I could agree with your ladyship in your kind and partial

opinion; but as there never was an occasion in which it can be more useful to excite popular feeling than in the cause of the Greeks, I send your ladyship a copy of the second edition [of my work], published a few days ago.

“I have the honour to be,

“With regard and esteem,

“Your ladyship’s faithful humble servant,

“ERSKINE.”

“No. 13, *Arabella Row, Pimlico, London,*

“October 11, 1822.”

“Lady Morgan, Dublin.”

The pamphlet which accompanied this note, abundantly proved, that neither the talent nor the feelings of this singularly gifted writer had abandoned him; yet circumstances had occurred, and become notorious, which implied that age had, in some respects, made sad havoc with his powerful intellect. There is nothing more curious in the history of the human mind, than the manner in which it falls to ruin; and in which splendid and magnificent fragments can subsist, in all their pristine beauty, amidst the total decay of the rest of the intellectual fabric.

## LORD CASTLEREAGH.

To go back once more to the P———. How often have I seen Whigs and Tories united round its splendid hearths in the great drawing-room, innocently playing their “small games,” after having played, through the preceding week, their great game, on the opposite sides of the two houses. How often have I seen the ministerial red box, (“big with the fate of Cato and of Rome,” bearing the busy tale of some of Napoleon’s unwelcome victories, or welcome defeats, or, haply stuffed with the materials of some green-bag disclosure,) scarcely deposited in the hands of its diplomatic owner, before it was suddenly jerked up into the air by the playful ingenuity of a romping peeress, and its mysterious contents scattered on the floor, while the laughing contriver of the overthrow exclaimed —“*Autant en emporte le vent!*” How often have I seen presidents of the council and lords comp-

trollers of royal households, taking lessons, there, in waltzing, at that time a novelty, fresh imported from D—— House: while “many a saint and many a hero,” who were then sinners and subalterns, trod upon those Persian carpets, which covered the paved cloisters and knee-worn cells of the ancient monks of St——e.

It was during the time passed in this delightful retreat (which was no retreat), that I had frequently the pleasure of meeting Lord Castlereagh. I say *the pleasure*, for (I take him here in his social phases only) he was one of those cheerful, liveable, give-and-take persons, in private, who are so invaluable in villa-life, where pleasure and repose are the object and the end. His implacable placidity, his cloudless smile, his mildness of demeanour, his love of music, his untunable voice, and passion for singing all the songs of the Beggar’s Opera,\* (in which I had always the honour

\* One evening, while thus engaged, to the utter abstraction from all surrounding circumstances, we had arrived at “Hark, I hear the toll of the bell,” when a sudden crash of all dissonant sounds produced as sudden a suspension of our own somewhat heteroclite harmonies. Tambourines, triangles, pokers, tongs, and shovels, were all pressed into the service. The ladies of the party,

of accompanying him, because nobody else would), his expertness at small plays, and the unalterable good humour with which he stood the brunt of the frequent practical jokes played off at his expense, rendered him most welcome in all the circles which he frequented, in the pauses of his arduous avocations.

I had then no acquaintance with European politics; but I was a furious little Irishwoman: and Lord Castlereagh used frequently to say, “no one cares for Ireland, but Miss O. and I.” I took this for sober earnest; and, in the pride of my ignorance and credulity, would repeat poor Louis the Sixteenth’s “*il n'y a que moi et Monsieur Turgot qui aime le peuple!*”

It is the recollection of that liberal and urbane spirit, which brought men of the most opposite opinions in public life, thus to mingle in the harmony of social confidence,—men who, in the high and courteous breeding of their elevated station,

thus armed for discord, had encircled us; and they added a general chorus of inextinguishable laughter, *ad libitum*, to the instrumental accompaniment they volunteered to Lord C.’s vocal performances. At the head of the band was Lady Castlereagh herself.

never suffered the acrimony of party to shed its venom on the graces of the private circle,—it is this recollection that has so often made me turn in disgust from the vulgar and brutal party feeling, which has prevailed among the ascendancy faction in Ireland, making political differences the ground for anti-social insolence, and carrying into the club and the drawing-room, the virulence and uncharitableness of public hostility.

Between social complaisance and political compliance there is no necessary connexion; and a stern adherence to principle is not incompatible with a good-humoured forbearance to opponents. Lord A——, as I have said, was a warm, and a sincere politician: and, much as he lived with both parties, he would have been the last to forgive or tolerate an act of baseness in his own. On the morning of the day which decided the turn of affairs, on the Prince's assumption of the Regency, I remember his saying to me, “Lord Castlereagh dines with us to-day; if he goes with the tide, if he rats, it will be for the last time—there is an end of our friendship for ever.” Lord Castlereagh, however, did not rat, and we enjoyed his society

at frequent intervals through the rest of the season, with that of his always joyous, pleasure-stirring Lady.

The last time I saw Lord Castlereagh was at Paris, in the year 1818, at the opening of the session by Louis the Eighteenth—a memorable epoch, and a most striking scene! I shall never forget the impression made on that occasion by the appearance of General La Fayette;—it was at the moment when the king, seated on his throne, (the princes of his family on either side, and his "*beloved peers*" and faithful commons around him.) received the oath of fidelity from all. Each individual, in his turn, on being called out by name, stretched forth his hand and pronounced "*Je jure!*" The emphasis, the petulance (so peculiar to French people in speaking), with which many eagerly and anxiously called out "*Je jure!*," who had made the same vow to every form of power which had successively followed, was finely contrasted by the calm, and dignified air, and slowly articulated enunciation of La Fayette,—who, of all that vast assemblage, was the one who had never uttered his

“*Je jure,*” nor pledged himself to the power that was not based in the rights of the people.

The moment his name was announced, and he stood forth, the type of all that was purest and best in the greatest revolution that had ever shaken the empires of the earth, a simultaneous murmur burst forth from all parties—proceeding, indeed, from various emotions, but all indicative of the intense interest his striking and venerable appearance excited. As he stood face to face with the king, and stretching forth his hand, pronounced his vow of fealty to the first constitutional monarch France had ever seen upon the throne, what a sweep of recollections passed over the minds of the spectators! It was at this moment, I perceived the fine head, and pale, impassable countenance of Lord Castlereagh, bearing forward from the diplomatic tribune, in deep observation of the scene. In the scale of humanity, never was there a more striking contrast, than was at this moment exhibited in the persons of the founders of the National Army of France, and the perpetrator of the Union in Ireland.

## MEDDLERS.

L'ABBE GAGLIANI says "that mankind are born with a disposition to meddle with other people's affairs ; and that liberty consists in nothing else but the power of indulging the propensity." As a sneer against popular governments, this may be an excellent joke, but it is directly the contrary of truth. The propensity to which men are really predisposed, is that of enjoying the fruits of other men's industry, and of directing the actions of the public towards their own private advantage. The utility of liberty is, that it puts some restraint upon the indulgence of this inclination. The affairs of the nation are the affairs of every one of its members : and tyrants and oligarchs are the real interlopers in their *gestion*, whose interference is impossible, when the guarantees of liberty are perfect.

It is, however, quite true, that in free states the

citizens are disposed to resent any abridgment of another's rights, and to interfere in the concerns of the oppressed, so far as to procure him redress. But every one, thus employed, is really acting for himself, and with the perfect consciousness that he is fighting his own battle. Few of Wilkes's contemporaries either loved or respected him, personally ; but when his rights were attacked by the government, he represented the people of England ; and the people had the sense and the spirit to force the ministry to desist from their violence.

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## PHILOSOPHY OF GRAMMAR.

I ASKED the question, should I say “every body is gone out only *I*,” or, “only *me*? ” and was answered “only *I*,” because “only *I*” means “*I alone*”—“remain.” being understood.

Had I used the conjunction “but” instead of “only,” the proper construction would have been

the same, because "but" means "be out," or, in more modern phrase, "I being out of the question." The modern "but," said my informant, represents two distinct words, both imperatives. When it stands for "be out," it is the precise equivalent of "except," derived from the Latin. Sometimes it is used for the imperative of an obsolete verb, signifying to add, which is now retained only in the infinitive—"to boot." Let us look for an instance:—here is one in Sir Charles Grandison, which lies open before me. Harriet Byron writes, after some preliminary reflections—"But, why should I torment myself? what must be, will." The interpretation of the passage is this;—to what I have already said, *boot* (or, in modern English, *add*,) this second thought, that what must be, will; and, therefore, why should I torment myself?" These two are the only real meanings of that Proteus-like conjunction; and one or other will explain all Johnson's hundred instances, scarcely one of which he understood properly. Johnson's industry was unwearied, but his research trifling. Authority, and not analysis, was its object. Authority belonged to his day, inquiry

to ours : so adieu to learning—and hey ! for knowledge :—*à bas les savans ! et vive le savoir !*

Alas ! it makes one's head ache to look over this grammatical jargon—I wrote my first twenty volumes without much troubling my head on the subject. But now “the school-master is abroad,” that is, he is at home—with *me*—and my march of intellect goes on without ever budging from the fire-side. “*Mon voyage autour de ma cheminée,*” would not be the least intellectual book I ever wrote. And yet, my dear Mr. Colburn would not give me £20 for all the grammar that I may write for the rest of my life; though I rivalled in etymological philosophy “*The Diversions of Purley.*”

Before I drop grammar,—What a droll pun is that of the grammarian presenting his book to the Académie, after the Duke de —— had advanced his pretensions to be elected one of the *quarante*, on the score of his illustrious ancestors. “*Je suis ici pour mon grand-père,*” said the duke. “*Je suis ici pour ma GRAMMAIRE,*” said his ignoble philosophical competitor.

By the by, grammar is the last thing that

should be placed in the hands of children, as containing the most abstract and metaphysical propositions, utterly beyond their powers of comprehension ; putting them to unnecessary torture ; giving them the habit of taking words for things, and exercising their memory at the expense of their judgment. But this is the original sin of education, in all its branches.

## MY VISITING BOOK.

*“ Ce seroit une belle chose que je ne susse vivre qu’avec les gens qui me sont agréables.*

MAD. DE SEVIGNE.

TO-DAY I looked over my visiting book, to clear out for the new year, and to eliminate some of the false and the foolish, who creep into every circle, however exclusive or small : for every body, from a duchess to a dairy-maid, may be exclusive in her own way. Not that I meant to carry my proscription to any great extent ; for if I were to admit only the honest and the clever, I might as well shut up shop altogether. There are, however, degrees in all things ; and there are some, so falsely false, and so foolishly dull, that principle and patience alike revolt, and so, out they go. But what is to be done with whole incursions from remote provinces,—large families from Bally, courts and castles, when one has a small house ?—as, for example, Mrs. Botherum of Castle Botherum, Miss Botherum, Mis: Anna Maria Botherum, Miss Jemima Matilda Botherum, Miss Honoria,

and Miss Frances Botherum ! Col. Botherum (of the yeomanry), Mr. Walter York Botherum, Mr. Ernest Augustus, and the Rev. Mortimer Botherum ! Shem, Ham, and Japhet, “a terrible sight ;” —and all this, when one has only a reception room, of which the divine Pasta said, the last time she did me the honour to sing in it, “*On pourra aussi bien chanter dans un fiacre,*” and a boudoir which might be placed on the show-table of a moderately sized London drawing-room : and this, too, with a passion for light as great as the Duchess de C——,\* and with lamps that would light up Erebus, and shew the slightest blot in the escutcheon of the toilette, where every body comes labelled for something.

No, this is beyond the acmé of human friendship ! *Ainsi cuit, on aurait mangé son père,*” says La Reynière of his favourite dish ; and there are ridicules in dress, manner, and bearing, which might excuse one’s *cutting*, if not “*cating*” one’s mother. The want of birth, rank, or fortune, are such mere, such inevitable accidents, such universal liabilities, that nothing above the lowest

\* *Les Veillées du Château.*

order of intellect, or the most degrading toadyism to the great of all sorts, could stoop to exclude from their society those who, with the exception of such accidental distinctions, possessed every other. But dress and address are within the attainment of every body; and the man who visits you in the morning in a milk-white waistcoat,\* or the woman, who, in the evening, when she is announced, stops to make a courtesy at the door of your drawing-room, must be wholly beyond the pale of social redemption.

Such anomalies are always indicative of *mauvais ton*; and *mauvais ton* is the want of good sense or good company. If, however, the white waistcoat is held out as a flag of singularity by a marked man, why then it becomes a *grade* in itself, like Jerningham's blue stockings, which founded a sect in literature. But since courtesies went out with hoops

\* I do not mean to say that in the progress of things it may not become perfectly justifiable to wear a white waistcoat in the morning; or that certain developments of mind, or combinations of circumstance, may not render it imperative to do so. I go but with my age; and I appeal to Lord A——y, or to my old friend Lord A——n, whether, *de nos jours*, a man who pays a morning visit in a virgin-white Marsilles waistcoat, is admissible within the pale of civilized society.

and all other grotesque things. the woman who courtesies is lost. She is inaccessible to all improvements, and will bring up her children to hate Catholic emancipation, gas, steam, and M'Adamised roads ; her sons will stick fast by 1688, and her daughters will propagate the family courtesy to endless generations.

In this respect, we residents are better off than the country ladies who come to their own mansions in the squares, and the “rows,” and the “places,” for the season, and who have the whole country rising *en masse* to follow, and fill their drawing-rooms, just as they occupy the castle in the country, on the strength of electioneering interests or county polities and jobs. This reconciles one amazingly to the fee-simple proprietorship of a few flower pots in the balcony—the only *terre* I could ever call my own.

What, however, particularly amused me to-day, was, not my “mere Irish,” nor my “English of the Pale” visitors ; but that, in looking over my list, for the few last years, I found an absolute congress from all parts of the known world ; and that representatives of the four quarters of the earth had passed through my little *taudis* in Kildare-street.

There was Major St. J—— B——, from Madras; Mr. B——, from Boston; Captain I——, from Calcutta; Col. T——, from Canada; Sir C. G——n, from the icebergs of Greenland, and Col. D——y, from the Kiosks of Isphahan; with many more droppers-in from the Ganges, and morning callers from the Ohio. There were, too, the *Neri* and *Bianchi*, from Florence; Imperialists and Nationalists from Lombardy, and Guelphs, Ghibelines, and carbonari, with romanticists and classicists, from all parts of Italy.

How prettily these historico-poetical names write down among the O's and the Macs of my “native troops!” the Strozzi, and Frangipani, and Pucci, and Piasasco, and Ugoni and Pozzo, and Cimetelli, and Castiglione, and Pepe—all connected with struggles for liberty, and with illustrations in letters, both in modern and ancient times. Then comes my quota from Spain, canonicos of cathedrals in Madrid, members of the Cortes, deputies to the Pope, and ex-ministers of the constitutional régime; then follow the charming French *voltigeurs*,—*vultigeurs* of nature and the good new times, with their revolutionary names

and imperial titles, my Dukes of I——a and M——llo, and the clever Du V——r and P——y, and Tha——rs ; and my German professors, “ truants from Gottingen,” who come to geologize, and to see Ireland and Dr. Macartney,\* and talk of Werner, and Kant, and Goëthe —.

Here, after all, lies the great compensation for the ills which authorship is heir to. It is the delightful privilege of literary notoriety to live in intelligence and communion with those whom, as Humboldt once said to me, “ make the fifth part of the world so well worth the other four,” the feeling and the thinking. This order constitutes the free-masonry of nature, which she has organized to explore her great truths, and to feed the lamp, which, though veiled and shadowed by a succession of errors, still burns, and will continue to burn, eternal as the cause for which it was created. It is the consciousness of a remote reciprocity and silent communion with such gifted individuals

\* Dr. Macartney, professor of anatomy in Trinity College, Dublin, one more celebrated abroad than known at home—the common fate of super-eminent talent every where. Dr. Macartney’s classes are attended by students from all parts of Europe and America.

that gives the moral courage, even to a female author, to tell those bold truths, which the base, the sordid, and the corrupt, are interested to deny, The tone of mind and talent of a woman especially fits her to enter into this mystic communion with kindred thinkers spread over the whole world. It belongs to her *finesse* and spirituality, to the feeling and the fancy that breathe over all she writes, thus to open a private intercourse, through the medium of the public press, to waft a sentiment to the pole, and speed a thought to the line—to revive a fading prepossession across the steep Atlantic, and to waken a latent association beyond the Alps ; to direct a sally to Calcutta ; to billet a *mot d'enigme* on New York ; and with the air of writing for the world, or the ambition of composing for posterity, to feel only the inspiration of an individual influence, and to *clear out* a cargo of odd and pleasant things by the good ship Sympathy, certain of its reaching the destined port and of being deeply prized by the correspondent to whom they are consigned. How many pilgrims has "Julie" brought to Lausanne, and "Corinne" to Copet, who in this marching age have directed

their movements to our "*Ultima Irlande*," to visit its natural wonders ; and who have made a *station* on thcir route, to drop a bead, and tell an *ave*, at the cell of one, whose zeal (if not her works) has entitled her to some consideration from the liberal and the free. When so many delightful spirits are *abroad*, who would not be always "*at home*," to receive them ? Alas, for the home !—the native home, that owes its charm, not to compatriot sympathy, or liberality, or genius, but to those

"*Posters by the sea and land,*"

who bring the intellect of Europe along with them, to shame our insular ignorance and bigotted prejudices.

If I had not taken this glance at my little visiting book, I should have had a solace the less to console me for the privations and sacrifices, which all who live in Ireland, from motives of private affection or public principle, must endure. There, the peaceable enjoyments and courtesies of life, its distinctions and its honours, are for a *caste* ; while, for all others, are reserved proscription or per-

secution!—the calumnies of a ribald press; and the contemptuous neglect, or (what is worse) the supercilious notice of that antinational class, which is alike insensible to genius and suspicious of patriotism. Among the great, the incalculable benefits to be conferred on Ireland by Catholic Emancipation, that of bettering the condition of private society, will not be the least valuable. Great rights and advantages come remotely and at intervals, to brighten, benefit, and improve the land to which they are granted; not so, the days, and hours, and minutes, that go to make up that existence, upon which a “*long account of hate*” between the oppressor and the oppressed has shed its bitter venom! What minute details of persecution!—what petty guerilla warfare, carried on from house to house, and street to street, in which no sex is spared—no virtues are a defence!—no talent forms a claim to compatriot respect! yet such has been the state of society in the most social of all countries for more than half a century! Should that act of common justice and common sense ever pass into a law—the act for removing Catholic disabilities, Ireland may still become one of the most *liveable* places in the

empire. For there are still to be found in the native land of Swift, Goldsmith, Sterne, Sheridan, Burke, Grattan, Canning, and Moore, all the elements which tend to brighten and illuminate the happiest circles. The temperament of the nation is essentially mercurial, prone to social enjoyment, affectionate, humorous, and pleasure-loving: and when the removal of those atrocious distinctions, which have so long spread dissension, and occupied the national mind with national grievances, shall leave the genius of the people to its fair and rational play, it may be prophesied that the capital of Ireland will become one of the most agreeable, if not the most important, of European cities.

Under such auspices, how delightful to open a visiting book, in which the names of all who are now divided into parties, sects, and factions, shall be found, without recalling one unpleasant association—and when (no longer indebted for all social, all intellectual enjoyments to the foreign visitor from happier and more enlightened lands), we shall feel and own,

“Our first, best country, ever is at home.”

## FOREIGN VISITORS

"Point de rose sans épine."

OH!—*par exemple*,—here comes a pretty commentary on the above text—a paragraph from some of the ribald journals which it would be pollution to name. It has just been sent me enclosed in an anonymous letter; for I have always some "good-natured friend," (as Sir Peter Teazle says) who furnishes me with abuse of myself, from those newspapers which I should deem it an act of the highest immorality to let into my house. I never, by the bye, could understand the logic of those, who, professing to detest calumny, and to abhor slander, still think it no delinquency to read and to purchase the journals which exist but by their propagation. To add to the revenue of such a speculation, is to become a participator in its criminality; for if every one who disdains to be himself guilty of falsehood, would refrain from buying it, ready-made to his hand, such disgraces

to the free press of the empire would be abolished more effectually than by all the restrictive laws and prosecutions for libels in the world.

Here is the paragraph alluded to :—

#### “LADY MORGAN AND THE AMERICANS.

“ The following anecdote, in every way good, is quoted by the Yankee from the Boston Literary Gazette :—

“ It was about two o’clock, p. m. when I stopped at the door of Sir Charles Morgan, Kildare Street, Dublin. I inquired for Lady M., to whom I had a letter of introduction. I was shown by the servant into a library, and while waiting for her ladyship, had an opportunity to survey the apartment. The upper regions displayed rich rows of books, in all the modern languages, and among them several of Lady Morgan’s works, in French, Italian, and German. The lower parts of the room exhibited a piano, a harp, and a Spanish guitar, with a profusion of songs scattered up and down. There were two writing-tables, a small cabinet of minerals in a glass case, and a collection of beautiful shells, also in a glass case.

Several small pictures occupied the spaces on the wall, and cameos, intaglios, medals, and other curiosities, adorned the mantel-piece. There was an air of negligence about the room, but it seemed to declare that the inhabitant of it had made every department of nature and art tributary to her pleasure."

"But 'tis my design  
To note the chamber—I will write all down—  
Such, and such, pictures—there the window!" &c.

*Cymbeline.*

Oh ! that the inventory had stopped there !—For the furniture, pass ! (though I deny the glass case—I have a total antipathy to glass cases); but the coming to personals, as in the following *catalogue raisonné* of beauties wanting, of charms "*absent without leave*"—this is really " too bad." But the Yankee goes on, and so here I am, (not in kit-kat) as sketched " at 2 o'clock, p. m." by my American visitor—who, after " noting the chamber," thus writes down—its mistress, unconscious as was Imogen of her midnight visitor, and as little suspecting to what sort of a limner she was sitting for her portrait, when she received this " Yankee from Boston :"

"At length Lady Morgan entered. She was short, with a broad face, blue, inexpressive eyes, and seemed, if such a thing may be named, about forty years of age. Her personal appearance is far from handsome—it is not even striking. There was an evident affectation of Parisian taste in her dress and manner."

I appeal!—I appeal from this *Caravaggio* of Boston to the Titian of his age and country—I appeal to you, Sir Thomas Lawrence!—would you have painted a short, squat, broad-faced, inexpressive, affected, Frenchified, *Greenland-seal-like* lady of any age? Would any money have tempted you to profane your immortal pencil, consecrated by nature to the Graces, by devoting its magic to such a model as this described by the Yankee artist of the "Boston Literary?" And yet you did paint the picture of this Lapland Venus—this impersonation of a Dublin Bay cod-fish—this *pendant* to Hogarth's *Poissarde* at the gates of Calais, who bears so striking a resemblance to the maiden ray she exhibits for sale. What is more, you painted it of your own free will and choice—gratuitously, and that too when

rival Duchesses were contending for the honour of reaching posterity, through your agency, with the beauties of Vandyke and the belles of Lely, all ready and willing to remunerate, with princely munificence, the talent, “whose price is beyond rubies.”

Well, I appeal from the portrait drawn by the Yankee to yours; “*et je m'en trouverai bien.*” Gladly do I “sweeten my imagination” by the recollection of those times of youth, and gaiety, and splendour, in which, associated under the same roof, I sat for, and you sketched that picture, thus by contrast recalled to my recollection! I remember a minister of state cracking jokes on one side of the table on which you were drawing, a royal princess \* suggesting hints, on the other, the Roscius of the age stalking up and down the room with the strides of Macbeth, and the look of Coriolanus, and half the beauties of future galleries and collections, fluttering round the exclusive patent-giver of eternal loveliness. Alas! no one could have said that I was “forty” then; and “this is the cruellest cut o' all!”—Woman, the most

\* Her late Majesty Queen Caroline.

enduring of created beings, will bear any thing but that. Had it been thirty-nine, or fifty !—thirty-nine is still under the mark, and fifty so far beyond it, so hopeless, such a “*lasciar speranze voi che intrate;*”—but **FOURTY** !—

“ Take any form but that,  
And my firm nerves will never tremble ”—

the critical age—the Rubicon—I cannot, will not dwell on it. But oh ! America !—land of my devotion and my idolatry—is it from you the blow has come ? Let Quarterlys and Blackwoods libel—but the “*Boston Literary!*”—“*Et tu Brutus !*”

My visitor from Boston “2 o'clock, p. m.” proceeds to give an account of my conversation, as accurately and minutely as he did the details of my house, person, and age. Having made the general remark, that “it was full of spirit and frankness,” he goes on to betray to the public the confidential communications I made to him on the occasion of this his first and last visit. These amounted simply to my abusing America and Washington Irving without measure, and it appears without motive, except to please my Boston visitor, who agreed with me in both instances.

This was being ‘frank and spirited’ with a vengeance !

Now, I here openly, frankly, and spiritedly publish my protocol to the city of Boston, requiring of the Bostonians, that they give me up this morning visitor, “at 2 o’clock, p. m.”—this Iachimo of literary *salons*—this positive denunciator of the *certain age* of ladies who wish their age to remain uncertain—this portrait painter en large, who calls little ‘short’ and round, ‘broad,’ and who

“Ne’er can any lustre see  
In eyes that do not smile on *me*”—

—himself—this violator of confidences made on the occasion of a first visit!—this Zoilus of the toilette and Yankee ‘*courier des dames*:’ I require the Bostonians, by their gallantry and their liberalism, their love of liberty and of the ladies, that they first catch me this backwoodsman, and then leave me to dress him!—But ’tis a threat thrown away—I do not, I will not believe that an American could thus violate all principle of courtesy, gallantry, hospitality, and truth. I have received persons from all parts of the United

States within the last eight years. I find on my visiting list the names of two gentlemen from Boston, who have frequented my house within the last two years, neither of whom could have committed such an act. I have not been wanting in the rites of hospitality to any one who has borne the name of an American. I honour the great cause of liberty, in the persons of those to whose fathers the world stands indebted for the greatest rally that ever was made round her standard ; and "I guess" that if there is one recreant American (American by the accident of birth) capable of such conduct as my Bostonian visitor "at 2 o'clock, r. m." has exhibited, the "whole order of gentlemen in America" would disown this Arnold of private society, as they did the political traitor, who dishonoured the region of freedom, by claiming it as his country.\*

\* Having received the proof sheet of the above little entry, (made in mere *gaieté de cœur* into my ledger,) at a moment when I am surrounded by an absolute congress of the United States, presented to me by my illustrious friend, General La Fayette, I take the opportunity to say, that they deny all knowledge of the journal in question, further than such a publication had lived and died within a few weeks, and was edited by a person bearing an *Irish name*, a writer for Blackwood's Magazine.

## IRISH UNION.

TWENTY thousand pounds defeated the opposition to the Scotch union—a sum barely sufficient to stop the eloquent patriotism of a single voter, when Lord Castlereagh sold Ireland, “ wholesale, retail, and for exportation.” Who will say that the Irish are not a civilized people?

## HUMAN MACHINERY.

DUGALD STEWART, in reference to the limited circle of jests, fables, and tales, which occur in the literature of all nations, is “almost tempted to suppose, that human invention is limited, like a barrel organ, to a specific number of tunes.”\* The number of our wants and desires, and consequently of the modes of social relation, being fixed,

\* First Dissertation to the Encyclopedia.

the combinations of thought to which they give rise, must be fixed also. The number of these elements being small, the primary combinations of idea to which they give rise, must be nearly alike in all nations. The fact is indisputable; and it leads to very serious consequences against the doctrine of free-will.

## SUICIDE.

THE love of life is the strongest of all human passions. To what end then, do we question the lawfulness of suicide? Where a law has no penal sanction, it is a dead letter: and he who dares to die, is beyond the reach of all penal influence. Suicide may be matter for religious discussion, but it is no subject for jurisprudence.

## EXTERNAL EXISTENCE.

THERE never was so egregious a piece of pedantic nonsense, as the dispute against the reality of the external world. We cannot, it is said, prove the fact ; but to prove a proposition means, to render it evident to the senses—nothing more. The last appeal in all disputes is to sensation. Even the abstract truths of numbers depend on simple facts, cognizable by the eye and the touch. It is, therefore, a gross misapplication of language to attempt the further proof of what is already felt. No sophism, however difficult of detection, can supersede the sensible conviction of external reality ; and Berkeley himself did not run his head against a post.

The theory of this divine, adopted for the purposes of religious theory, leads at once to atheism. We believe in God, as the necessary creator of the world ; but the idealist has no ground for believing any other existence than his own mind. Such meta-

physics are the boast of the class, who while they refuse education to the people, have the hardihood to deny the capability of the poor man to understand his own affairs. When did the most barbarous ignorance ever fall into such mistakes, as this product of misapplied learning?

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## ECLECTICS.

Eclectics, in philosophy, are for the most part *les demi-esprits*, who are incapable of viewing facts in their wholeness; just as the eclectics in polities are they who want the honesty to be quite pure, and the courage to be quite rogues. Such persons make systems from inconsistent scraps, taken from discordant philosophy, with the same taste as the architects of the middle ages erected barbarous edifices with the beautiful fragments of antiquity.

## ATTITUDES OF GRIEF.

MR. SHANDY's observation, that grief always seeks a horizontal position, passes for a good joke ; it happens, however, to be good philosophy. Grief, by exhausting the vital powers, renders an upright position irksome and painful. Who that has left or lost the object he loves, but has felt the necessity of a drooping head upon folded arms ; or the solace of a total prostration of form ?

Under the terrible inflictions of all master griefs, the physical and moral forces go together. For who can dissolve that mysterious union, of which so much is said, so little known, and on which for saying anything, so many have been ridiculed as spiritualists, or burnt as materialists ? Man is not to be led to inquiry, with impunity. Those who so liberally reward the impostor, never fail to persecute the teacher, and while they swallow every falsehood and fable, most injurious to their

\* true interests and well being, with undoubting confidence, they oppose and impede every noble enterprise, and every beneficial discovery in the range of moral and physical science.

It probably arises from the acute, though not very durable sensibility of southern countries, that on the occasions of heavy suffering, the afflicted sink at once into the utter helplessness of a prostrate attitude. That which nature inspired as a relief, pride soon converted into a ceremony. As soon as the death of a near friend occurred, in any of the royal, noble, or even gentle-blooded families of the continent, the nearest relative, in former times, went to bed. There he remained, or was supposed to remain, a certain number of weeks, days, or hours, according to the rank of the person lamented, until the visits of condolence were over, and grief, regulated by etiquette, was permitted to pause, or throw off "its weight of woe." From the fifteenth to the seventeenth century, every item in the chambers and *toilette* of royal affliction, was prescribed by authority. One of the most curious pictures extant of this red-book sensibility of our ancestors, which

seems upon a par with their “wisdom,” is to be found in a very old and amusing French work, “*Les Honnours de la Cour*,” written by Alienor de Poitiers, Viscountesse de Furnes, a lady of the Court of the Duc de Bourgogne, in 1469. In her chapter upon royal mourning, or (in her own charming old French,) “*Sur le deuil que toutes les princesses et autres devoient porter pour leurs maris, pères, mères, et parens,*” observes, that a queen of France must remain one year in the chamber, where she first receives the news of her husband’s death ; and every body knows, “*chaquin doibt scavoir,*” that the chambers, halls, &c., of the widowed queen must be hung and covered with a black cloth. A picture is always well worth a dozen descriptions, and the picture of the mourning of the Princess de Charolois, for her father, the Duke de Bourbon, is well worth transcribing.

“ Son père éstoit trépassé : incontinent qu’elle sceut la mort, elle demeura en sa chambre six semaines, est éstoit toujours couchée sur un lict couvert de drap blancq de toile, et appuyée d’oreillers : mais elle avait mit *sa barrette*, son manteau, et chapperon lesquels estoient fourrez de

*menuvair*, et avait le dit manteau une longue queue, aux bords devant le chapperon une paulme de large, le menuvair (c'est à scavoir le gris) estoit crespé dehors. La chambre éstoit toutte tendue de drap noir, et en bas, un grand drap noir, en lieu de tapis velu, et devant la dicte chambre où Madame se tenoit y avoit une autre grand chambre ou salle pareillement tendue de drap noir. Quand Madame estoit en son particulier, elle n'estoit point toujours couchée, ni en une chambre.”\*

While, however, princesses were obliged to weep for six weeks in black rooms, on state beds, the banneresses (or peeresses) were only required to shed their obedient tears and lie in bed for nine days—a very fair proportion of sensibility, between the ranks of the parties. But though it was not

\* Her father was dead ; and as soon as she heard the news, she shut herself up in her chamber for six weeks, remaining constantly upon a bed covered with white linen, and resting on pillows. She wore her stomacher, her cloak, and hood, which were lined with minever, and the said cloak had a long train ; and at the borders, and before the hood, for the breadth of a palm, the minever was curled outwards. The chamber was hung with black cloth in the place of tapestry, and before this chamber was another great chamber, or hall, likewise hung with black. While Madame was alone, she did not remain on the bed, or confined to one room.”

required that they should lie on their bed of sorrow as long as royal mourners, it was ordained that they should sit in front of their beds, for the remnant of their six weeks, “upon a piece of black cloth.”

“ Les banneresses ne doibvent estre que nœuf jours sur le lict, pour père ou mère; et le surplus des six semaines, assises devant leur lict, sur un grand drap noir, mais, pour maris, elle doibvent coucher six semaines.”

A strict observance of pompous ceremonies, in nations as in individuals, is a proof of stagnant intellect. None but the vain, the idle, and the useless, can afford the leisure necessary to enact such pageants. The great, therefore, have always been the grand conservators of such abuses of time, taste, and good sense. In England, the old Duchess of Northumberland,—in Ireland, the grandmother of the present Marquis of Ormond,—were the last ladies of quality who appeared with a running footman.

Towards the middle of the seventeenth century, the French people, energized by the civil dissensions of the League and the Fronde, had made a consider-

able progress in intellect and literature. It was the middle class which produced nearly all the genius that has given to the gorgeous reign of Louis XIV. the character of an Augustan age. Corneille, Racine, Molière, La Bruyère, La Fontaine, Boileau, &c. &c., were all men of the people.

But while the middle class, unimpeded by forms, and unoccupied by ceremonies, were directing the national intellect towards science, literature, and the arts, the court and the aristocracy, stopping short with the past age, remained devoted to the observances of all the idle forms indissolubly mixed up with their exclusive privileges ; and, ignorant of books, they were still deeply “studied in sad ostent,” in court calendars of ancient ceremonies “authorized by their grandams.”

The barbarous forms, ceremonies, and observances of the fifteenth century were in full operation in the court of Louis XIV, and are recorded with the same unction by Dangeau, as by the Dame Alienor of Poictiers.

In a work, which says more for the necessity of the French Revolution, and its inevitability, than all that Jacobinism ever preached from the

tribune, or fulminated from the press,—he relates circumstantially all the ceremonies observed on the death of the Dauphin, and the prescribed forms of grief strictly adhered to by the royal widow. Even the Princesses of the blood, it appears, were still obliged to grieve in bed. “*Madame la Duchesse* (says Dangeau) *reçut les compliments sur la mort de M. le Duc*; *elle était sur son lit et en chapron, qui est un habillement des princesses du sang, quand elle recevoient en cérémonie les compliments sur la mort de leurs maris.*”\*

What a charming picture Madame de Sévigné has left on record of the manner in which the Duchesse de Longueville received “*les visites de doléances*,” on the death of her gallant son the Count de St. Pol.—One is absolutely seated within the *Ruelle*, and gazing on those beautiful eyes, steeped in tears of maternal despondency, which once nearly brought the Duc de la Rochefoucauld to the scaffold. Even that anti-sentimental Princess, *La grande Mademoiselle*, takes her despair to heart on

\* “The duchess received compliments of condolence on the death of the Duke. She was on a bed, and in her hood, which is the dress of princesses of the blood, when they receive in state the compliments on the death of their husbands.”

the loss of her lord, and receives the visits of condolence paid her by her friends, on the king's breaking off her marriage with De Lauzun, as she must have received them had she become his widow.

The origin of the form lies in nature—its absurdities are peculiar to despotic governments, where all is form, and where kings themselves, as the Spanish ambassador said, “are but ceremonies.” The governments that belong to constitutional institutions are not thrown upon the conservation of such barbarous etiquettes ; and if English queens and princesses are not obliged to weep for their near relations in bed for six weeks, for the amusement of a crowded and idle court, they probably owe to *Magna Charta* the liberty of mourning how they please, as long as they please—or of not weeping at all, if they please not to weep.

At the epoch of the French Revolution, the forms of the court of France were virtually as barbarous as those of the court of the Duc de Bourgogne in the fifteenth century ; and the description left on record by Madame Campan of the queen's receiving the “*chemise*,” is infinitely more indecent, and quite as barbarous,

as any thing recited by Dame Alienor de Poictiers, of her “*princesses, comtesses, et autres grandes dames,*” or by Dangeau in his punctilious record of the ceremonious absurdities of Versailles and the Tuilleries in the time of Louis the XIVth, and the Père de la Chaise.

By the bye, I have a whole chapter to write upon beds, sofas, *canapés*, *ruelettes*, *tabourets*, *lits de repos*, &c. &c. &c. &c.—and a most philosophical chapter it will be.

## RELIGIOUS DIABOLISM.

Le Comte de Ségur observes, “*Si Dieu a fait l'homme à son image, l'homme le lui a bien rendu.*” Reason leads to the discovery of the divine attributes as pure abstractions; but as no man can rise to the conception of higher principles of action, than those of which he is himself conscious, when fools or impostors throw the divinity into action, they necessarily impart to their idea something of their own weakness and infirmities. Let the creed of any sect be as pure and as elevated as it may, the mass of bigots, hypocrites, and mal-organized beings among its

professors, inevitably end in worshipping a demon. They may continue to call the idol of this fabrication, the reflection of their own vices and follies, "most wise, or most merciful." &c., &c. but they attribute to their fearful phantom, their own hateful passions and narrow views : and the result is a being, just so much worse than themselves, as he is more powerful and more uncontrolled. Such is the origin of religious diabolism--for an illustration of which see the self-tormenting sects of India, who preach a doctrine of perpetual suffering and bodily anguish, as being most pleasing to the God of all good. See, too, the gloomy Calvinists, and long-faced sectarians, and the dark preachers of sacrifice all over the world. Between the religion of love and fear, what a difference ! It is that beautiful traditional picture of the human divinity, the *Ecce Homo* of Carlo Dolci, opposed to the grim and gaunt idol of the pagodas of the unhappy Hindoos.

## FÊTES, PARTIES, AND SOIRÉES.

WHAT a terrible thing it is to give a party in Dublin !

“ Double, double, toil and trouble,  
Fire burn, and cauldron bubble.”

It is no joke even in London, where every thing is to be hired, from the chairs to the company ; where “ society to let,” has been a sign set up by more than one leader of *ton*, ready to fill the house of any Mrs. Thompson, or Mrs. Johnson, upon the understood terms of no meddling on the part of the hostess, and no obligation to make a due return on the part of the guests. What is strange in all this toil of pleasure is, that not only the good sort of people have a great deal to do, in getting up a party, but that the great themselves, (such of the great as do not live in the “ houses,” modelled on a French hotel,) have nearly as much trouble to make “ ample room and verge enough” to suffo-

cate their friends commodicously, as the twaddles in Bloomsbury, the tabbies of Finsbury, or the dwellers in any other *terra-incognita* of Mr. Croker's topographical map of fashion.

I once caught a certain "bonnie duchess," up to her eyes in lamps and loungers, garlands and wax lights, and the rest of the *matériel* for a party, an hour before the throwing open of her rooms to that "world," which her talent and pleasantry so long governed and cheered. As I was a *Missy*, her good-natured grace had bid me come very early, that she might see how I was dressed : for she took a kind interest in me, for no other reason, that I know of, except that I stood in need of it. Early, therefore, I went, but so early, that all the behind-the-scenes bustle was still in its fullest activity.

The Duchess of —— then resided in Lord A—st's house, which afforded quarters much too circumscribed to hold her legions of fashion ; and all her ingenuity was applied, in order to make crushing room for five hundred particular friends. What a hurry-scurry ! footmen, still in their jackets, running about with lights to

place and replace, like the clerical scene shifters in *Santa Maria Maggiore* at Rome, on a Christmas-eve,—the porter, half-liveried, the page half bedizened, and the French *femme-d'ambre*, with her hands in the pocket of her silk apron, chattering to every body, and helping nobody !

All this was very striking, but very comfortless ; so I sauntered out of one room into another, and had just drawn near to the only fire I met with in the *suite*, when a loud hammering behind me induced me to look back ; and there, mounted on a step-ladder, stood a bulky, elderly lady, in a dimity wrapper, and a round-eared cap, knocking up a garland of laurel over the picture of some great captain of that day, military or political, (I forget which,) while an argand lamp burned brightly before it,—a votive offering to the idol of the moment !

As I took the elderly lady for a housekeeper, I asked her if the duchess was still in her dressing-room ? “ No. child,” said the elderly lady, “ the duchess is here, *telle que vous la voyez*, doing that which she can get none of her awkward squad to do for her :” and down sprang the active lady of seventy, with a deep inspiration of fatigue, ejaculat-

ing, “Gude God, but this pleasure is a toilsome thing.”

So saying, she bustled off, and in less time than could be imagined, re-appeared in the brightest spirits and the brightest diamonds,—I had almost said the brightest looks that illumined her own brilliant circle. Hers was what Horace Walpole calls “the true huckaback of human nature;” and to the last it showed the strength and beauty of the web.

This party turned out one of the most agreeable I ever was at in my life. I spent the evening, seated on the second flight of stairs, between Lady C—— L—— and Monk Lewis. The beautiful Lady Oxford sat a few steps above us, the Aspasia of the Pericles who lay at her feet, wooing in Greek, in spite of Johnson’s denunciation against learning in love; while Payne Knight looked on, with “eycs malign, askance.” On the landing-place beneath, squeezed, sauntered, or halted, many a (*now dowager*) dandy and top-sawyer of fashion, who received our grape-shot, or gave us a *batterie d’enfilade* in return, as they crushed on. At two in the morning, Lady C—— L—— proposed that we should go and sup

snugly at M—— house, and return to waltz, when her grace's rooms should thin ;—and so we did, —for

“ Such were the joys of my dancing days.”

But to return to those who “ to a party give up what was meant for mankind.” A most interesting book might be made on the philosophy of parties, which would include a brief abstract of the times in which they were given, and throw a glaring light on the manners, habits, and tastes of nations, in all parts of the world, and at all epochs; from the *soirées* of Aspasia, to my own little *soirée* last night in Kildare Street. What were the Duchess of G——on's or Lady C——k's party-giving talents, great as they were, to those of Cleopatra, to her aquatic party down the Cydnus?—What to this, were the white-bait excursions, or even the Marquis of Hertford's festivities, on the Thames?

The most splendid fête of modern times was that given by the grand Condé to his cousin Louis the Fourteenth, at Chantilly—memorable for the heroic death of that *preux* and martyr of the kitchen, Vatel, which forms so amusing a page in

that breviary of all that is pleasant, the letters of Madame de Sévigné. The story is told in a hundred other accounts of the *fuseli* of those gorgeous days; but who can relate like her?—No man that ever wrote, not even Horace Walpole, the first of all English *raconteurs*—nor, except Madame de Staal,\* any woman either.

The most sumptuous private party of our days was the Boyle Farm entertainment. The relays of shoes were, at least, a novel idea: but pleasure is the end of all social assemblies, (as, under a variety of pompous names, it is of life itself,) and I doubt whether all the shoes in Borsley's shop would excite one pleasurable sensation except in the possessor of some *joli petit pied de Cendrillon*. However meritorious, therefore, for its originality, it was, for the rest, altogether English. It encouraged trade, and provided comfort. But the great, the true merit of this *partie des notables*, was, that to qualify for an invitation, neither genealogical trees, though deeper rooted than that of the Croys,†

\* Mademoiselle Delaunay.

† The family of the Duke de Croy is, I believe, one of the oldest in France. The entreaty of one of the duke's ancestors to Noah, of “*Sauvez les papiers des Croys*,” is well known.

nor all the wealth of all the Rothschilds, sufficed singly and alone, if nature refused to countersign the passport of admission. Countesses rejected—Duchesses passed over—and the sovereigns of Almack's, the absolute queens themselves forgotten, or forbidden, made way for the *bel air* of nature. Youth, beauty, talent, wit, grace, and agreeability (provided they dressed well) found no exclusion from the extreme exclusionists of all besides. This trait of fashion forms a good augury of times, in which the intrinsic is in all things about to take the lead of the extrinsic. The last touch of perfection in civilization, is a just appreciation of the value of nature.

Parties, as the term is applied throughout Great Britain, to private assemblies, were unknown on the continent, till the late swarming of the English abroad, who carry their own habits with them every where. In France, before the revolution, there was nothing that resembled a London rout. No *bals parés*, nor fêtes of any kind, were given in Louis the Fourteenth's time, except to the royal family, by the *haute noblesse*, or the ministers. Next to the fête at Chantilly, the

most sumptuous on record, was the entertainment given at Vaux by the unfortunate intendant, Fouquet, to the King, Queen Dowager, and Madame de la Vallière.

It was a redeeming point in all such festivities, that talent and intellect entered for something. Plays, masques, and interludes were written for the occasion; and it was for Fouquet's fête, that Molière wrote his delightful comedy of "*Les Fâcheux*," an admirable subject for a royal auditory, exposed as all princes are to the tiresomeness of eternal sycophancy.

This fête is also remarkable as an illustration of the falseness, vanity, and feebleness of him for whom it was given, and of the vice of the whole system which prevailed in France, up to the time of the revolution. The king, who had forgiven his minister his exactions from the famishing people, his depredations on the provinces, and his wasteful prodigality of the public money, could not brook the superiority of Vaux over St. Germain, the splendour of a party exceeding any thing given at the Louvre or Fontainbleau, and the impression it might make on the heart of his mistress.

The ruin of Fouquet, long remotely meditated, was now determined on ; and the good taste of his courtiers alone prevented the royal guest from arresting his host, in the very midst of the gaieties got up for his own pleasure and amusement. This party was given on the twentieth of August, and the *bienséance* of the court put off the arrest of the party giver till the seventh of September.

Opposed to such royal fêtes, a delightful contrast is presented in the private society of Paris, always distinguished as *la ville*, in opposition to *la cour*. What charming pictures remain to us of the little *côteries* of the Hôtel Carnavalet, the suppers at Ninon's, the *soirées* of the Hôtels de la Rochefoucauld and Coulange, and the *Mercuriali*, or Wednesday evenings, of Menage. The circle seldom included more than eight or ten persons, who met to laugh with Molière and Boileau, at the vices of the court, or the absurdities of the Hôtel Rambouillet (the blue-stocking rendezvous of that day). “ Monsieur de Rochefoucauld,” says Madame de Sévigné, “ wished me to go to him this evening to hear the reading of a comedy by Molière, ‘ *Les Précieuses*.’ After

a joyous supper on a pigeon pie, at Madame de Coulange's," (whose own wit was said to be *une dignité*) " we amused ourselves by going at midnight to fetch Madame de Scarron *du fin-fond du Faubourg St. Germain*, beyond Madame La Fayette's, and almost at Vaugirard, in the country." This topographical sketch is worth something, independently of the frolic of the gay grandmother, taken, at midnight, to Vaugirard, from the Marais, where her own hotel stood, and still stands.

Towards the conclusion of Louis the Fourteenth's reign, from the time when Madame de Maintenon, (no longer the Madame de Scarron of Vaugirard,) brought religious hypocrisy into fashion, the private society of France degenerated, and intellect lost ground. "I hate people that reason," said the king, sharply, in answer to some clever observation of the son of the Duc de la Rochefoucauld.

La Bruyère describes the *decadence* of society at this period, with his usual talent for exquisite observation; and in doing so, he has left the following beautiful picture of the style of

good company, which prevailed in the private circles of Paris, after the stirring times of the Fronde. “*Les conversations légères, les cercles, la fine plaisanterie, les lettres enjouées et familières, où l'on étoit admis seulement avec de l'esprit, tout à disparu.*”\* “The women of our days,” he continues, “are either devotees, or coquettes, gamblers, or *ambitieuses*; some of them are all these at once. The rage for favouritism, play, gallantry, and confessors, has got possession of the fortress, and defends it against the intellectual and the witty.” Still there was always in France a little band of the faithful, to tend the altar and trim the lamp of the true worship; and if, as La Bruyère says, “Voiture and Sarrasin were born for their age, and for the Rambouilletts and the Longuevilles, parties as intellectual, and as agreeable, were presided in after times, by D'Alembert, Diderot, De Boufflers, and Guibert, in the drawing-rooms of Mesquames Tencin, Du Defsand, L'Espinasse, and Montmorenci.”

While private society was thus making its

\* “The easy conversations, the circles, the delicate pleasantry, the familiar and playful letters, to which wit and intellect alone gave access—all have disappeared.”

progress upon the true principles of ease, pleasure, and intelligence, the descendants of Louis the Fourteenth, and his circle, were kept as close to the precedents established at Versailles and Chantilly, as the age would permit; and the fêtes given at L'Ile Adam, Chantilly, and the Palais Royal, immediately before the revolution, were still directed by *un auteur bel esprit*, who made as much a part of the household, as the cook or maître d'hôtel. Collé suited his poetry *de circonstance* to the taste of the Palais Royal; Laujon was the Pastor Fido of the muses and graces of Chantilly; and Pont de Vesle, the egotistical intimate of the egotistical Du Deffand, was the *bel esprit* of the Prince de Conti, with the title of reader and *Sécretaire des commandemens*. The poor *bel esprit* held a most mortifying position between a menial and confidential friend. His privileges were to have a room in the palace, to follow his prince to the country, and to be allowed to come in with the dessert after dinner, and eat ices, standing behind the chairs of his patrons, for three quarters of an hour. These privileges, which were privations, were as mortifying as they were *bien constatés*!

In England, from Mrs. Masham's dull political

assemblies, to the good routes of modern times, nothing resembling the French *soirée* existed, if the blue-stocking parties of Mrs. Montague, and the brilliant and refined *réunions* of Devonshire House are excepted. Bonaparte, who feared the *salons* of Paris more than the Aulic Council, or the cabinet of St. James's, discouraged private parties ; and taking exception to those of Madame de Staël, sent her to give her little senate laws at Copet. On the return of the Bourbons, the exigencies of the times congregated into small and intimate parties the followers of the different factions : and all Paris was broken up into coteries. In 1818, when things were more firmly established, *on avoit changé cela*, the English magnates had set the fashion of English routes, and French ladies went about saying, “ Only imagine, ten cooks and thirty-two decorators are employed for the rout of my Lady H——.” Great assemblies were affected by all the English, which, generally speaking, consisted of just such English and Irish as nobody in London and Dublin cares to have, with the addition of some of the old emigrant noblesse, provided by certain female purveyors, whose early residence in Paris had ex-

changed their English obscurity for foreign importance.

As I was perfectly independent of these officious *fournisseurs*, and knew all that was best worth knowing in France, living, as I should wish to do everywhere, with the fifth part of the world, instead of going to an English rout, I determined on giving French *soirées* myself.

"Take a day," said Denon, "and your rooms will never be empty," and in the confidence of this prophecy, I took my day; nor would I have exchanged some of my Wednesday evenings for all the evenings that dignified the *Mercuriali* of McLage. With such men, as Denon, Humboldt, La Fayette, Langles, Segur, B. Constant, Manuel, De la Rochefoucauld, De Stael, Jay, Jouy, Dupaty, Talma, with half the *côté gauche* to boot, at my parties, it is little to be wondered at if admissions to them were canvassed as a distinction, particularly by strangers: and many even of the ribboned members of the ultra noblesse, wedged in between a *doctrinaire* and a *modéré*, like an anchovy in a sandwich, ventured now and then to peep in, for the

purpose of seeing, once in a way, *les hommes marquans du siècle*—to hear Talma recite, and Jouy read.

On these occasions, one of the great attractions was La Fayette. The moment he appeared (and his erect and noble figure, and lofty air, distinguished him above the rest), a crowd of young men, who had watched for his arrival, followed and surrounded him, and their ardent, upturned faces, and sparkling eyes, formed a striking contrast to the benign serenity of his calm and venerable countenance; while their rapid and eager questions were equally opposed to the measured and emphatic enunciation with which he replied.

It was extremely pleasant on these occasions to see the “*avant, pendant, et après*” of the revolution united, and forming one piquant and instructive *tableau*. The presence also of the Marquise de Vilette, with some few of her contemporaries who still lingered on the surface of society, was always a striking circumstance in the picture: and some little traces of the *toilette* of 1776 (the epoch when she was by the side of Voltaire, to replace the crown he declined, or to assist him to

the *fautcuil*, the throne of his triumph) were still visible in her dress, along with the miniature of her adopted father, which she always wore, as her order of merit.

In looking over the early pages of my "log-book," I find the following entry, dated Rue de Helder, Jan. 1819. It is just legible to myself, so I will clear it out, and enter it here as an *à propos*.

A charming and crowded *soirée*, not however "*pour les beaux yeux de mon mérite*," but because it was known that Talma was to give a scene from Macbeth, and Madame Duchenois to read an act of Jouy's new tragedy, suppressed by the minister of police. What a congress of talent! The Count de Segur, Denon, B Constant, and Langles in one group; General La Fayette, with the Duc de Broglie, Auguste de Stael, the Marquis Capponi, and the brave Colonel Favier in another; General Berthier in the centre of a circle of pretty women, among whom was the Princesse Jablonowska, whom Napoleon pronounced to be one of the most charming persons of her country, where all the women are charming; and

the Comtesse de la Rochefoucauld, with her "*grâce, plus belle que la beauté même*," and the Beauveaux, that splendid family which would have been the inspiration of a Titian, and given him brighter models of loveliness than the Famiglia of Cornaro. There was my dear friend the Laird of Bara, in full regimentals, from the *réception* of the Duc d'Orleans, and a knot of young Americans, with the agreeable members of their embassy. And then, for my Irish quota, there was he of whom it may be said, that he was "*né pour tous les siècles et avec tous les talents*,"—the last best specimen of Irish wit, and Irish humour, who, whether he talks Greek with Porson, Irish with O'Leary, or French with B. Constant, leaves it in doubt to what age or country he belongs—the delightful P. L.—. Then there were my two most distinguished countrywomen, Ladies—, chatting with Lydia White, who always says the best thing that is said in whatever language she speaks; and the Duchess of D—; with her sibyl look drawing off Denon, to talk of those arts she loved so sincerely and protected so liberally. Dupaty also was there, who promised to read us some of his *délateurs*,

and would not ; and Jay, and Etienne, and the heart and soul of the Minerve and the Constitutionnel, and Charles Pougens, (as I was told,) for I could not make my way to the anti-room, where, among La Fayette's *belle jeunesse de France*, stood the friend of D'Alembert and Diderot, the most agreeable blind man of this or any other country.

Just as Mademoiselle Duchenois and Talma had sat down to the reading table, and began the tragedy which was a censure on its censurers, the Kaimachan of Wallachia came in, all cachemires and turban, embroidery and brilliants. What a sensation among the Parisian *petites maitresses* ! Here were shawls that might have purchased the whole extreme *droit*, and sold France back to its old master. What added to the sensation was, that my servant Le Clair announced him as the Persian ambassador,—‘*mon illustre confrère*,’ in the Freemasons' Lodge of *Belle et Bonne*, who had been expected. So it was some minutes before we could get back from the Arabian Nights to our own, which terminated splendidly with Talma's acting the scene of Macbeth and the witches, thrown into a dream

(by Ducis) which Macbeth relates to his wife—a most cold conception, but most wonderfully represented. How much of Talma's genius was lost, by his being only seen and heard in the immensity of the *François!* What struck me most was the graphic splendour of Shakspeare's genius, piercing through the still medium of French declamation—the picturesque vitality of his fine dramatic action, coming out through the tameness of narrative, which, however freely given, (and it was given with a force inconceivable to those who have not seen Talma act in private), is always a tame vehicle when compared with dialogue.

A ball at a banker's carried off the *bel air* of my party before midnight: and so Denon, Talma, Langlés, and Madame La Vilette, with some half a dozen others, remained round the fire, to chat. Talma took down from the mantel-piece a book, which had just come in. It was Madame de Genlis' "Extraits du Langeau." "This, at least," I said, "will bring her into fashion with the Bourbons." "Not a bit," said Denon: "they know each other too well." Talma fell upon the anecdote of the two actors, who were dismissed from the

theatre and ruined, because they had displeased the Dauphine *par deux sots placets*. At this act of littleness, Madame de Genlis cannot restrain her admiration. “If,” she said, “Louis the Eighteenth should dismiss two great actors for want of respect, there would be a general insurrection in society. Yet this event made no sensation in Louis the Fourteenth’s time.”

“*Il est passé le bons vieux temps,*” sung Talma, from a vaudeville, which Carbonel had been singing. “I remember,” said Madame de Vilette, “when young Vestris sprained his ankle, and could not move, the queen, who had her brother, the Emperor Joseph, in her box, sent behind the scenes to insist on his dancing: “*Ne fut ce qu’un entré.*” The thing was impossible, and the minister Breteuil immediately signed an order to arrest Vestris, who was sent to La Force.”

Talma shuddered; and Denon told the anecdote of the old *Dieu de la Danse* on this occasion, “*C'est la première brouillerie de notre maison avec la famille des Bourbons.*”

I think it was Langlès who said, that the nickname of *La Mère de l’Eglise*, by which Madame de

Genlis is distinguished among the wicked wits of Paris, is not a modern malice. It was given her on occasion of her publishing "*La Religion Considérée*," &c., a deep theological work, written when she was the platonic friend of Egalité. This christian work was a most unchristian attack on the philosophers, whom she hated, as mothers of the church alone know how to hate.

"The actor's privilege, however," said Talma, "of being insolent, did not compensate the degradation of the caste, whose liberty and life were at the mercy of every court favorite, from the prince of the blood to his *valet de chambre*."

"Still," I said, "the actors had a fine time of it under Louis the Fourteenth. It was an allusion to the wealth and consequence of La Dancour, that La Bruyère has said, that the actor, lolling in his carriage, casts its mud in the face of Corneille, who goes on foot."

"Yes," said Talma, "but La Bruyère has also said, that we in France think of the actors like the Romans, and live with them like the Greeks."

"The favour of the great," said M., "un-

accompanied by their esteem, is not a distinction, but a disgrace."

The conversation reverted to Dangeau, Madame de Genlis, and Demontey's amusing extracts from the same work, which form the most humorous comment that could be given on Madame de Genlis. Madame de Sévigné had long since made hers, when describing a day at Versailles, "*On parle sans cesse, et rien ne demeure sur le cœur ; et Dangeau est ravi de tout ce caquet.*"\* What a motto for his book !

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## DOCTRINE OF CAUSATION.

ONLY think of my giving myself the air of talking metaphysics this morning, and throwing in a word on the *Doctrine of Causation*, merely to shew off before the Prince C——li, Count del P——o, and L—— B——, who were breakfasting with us. A look from "my master"

\* "They talk there without ceasing, but nothing remains in the heart of all they say ; and Dangeau is ravished with this gossip."

convinced me, that like *Cathon*, “ I had got “ *furieusement dans lénigme* ;” and with the distressed Irish gentlewoman, whose necessities obliged her to cry “ hot mutton pies,” and who always added, “ *I hope nobody hears me*,” I too hoped my observation had escaped the ears for which it was intended; and so I began to recommend the beauties of the county of Wicklow to my guests, and made “ pure description hold the place of sense,” or *non-sense*. When they were gone, we fell to talk upon the subject, and here was the result.

The idea of cause is a consequence of our consciousness of the force we exert in subjecting externals to the changes dictated by our volition. From this we deduce the presence of a force, which is the *sine qua non* of those other changes in matter, in which we have no part. It is this association of ideas which predisposes the savage to impute intelligence and volition to the unknown causes of natural phenomena. Experience, shewing the constant concurrence of certain antecedents with certain consequences, while it dispels the error of the savage concerning voluntary

agents, strengthens the notion of natural causes into a principle. 'The human mind cannot conceive a cause which is not necessary ; because the same experience, which proves that it is a cause, proves the universality of its antecedence to the effect, with which it stands in relation.

### THE COUNTESS D'ALBANY.

TALKING of the accidents, incidents, and odd conjunctions of travelling, it happened, one fine autumnal morning, at Florence — (and oh, for the Tuscan autumn ! with its “Tuscan grapes,” fresh olives, and autumnal flowers, which give the Tuscan capital its pretty name) — it happened that my illustrious countryman, Mr. Moore, my husband, and myself, were seated on a sofa in our old palace in the *Borgo Santa Croce*, looking at the cloud-capt Apennines, which seemed walking in at the win-

dows,—and talking of Lord Byron, (from whose villa on the Brenta, Mr. Moore had just arrived,) when our Italian servant, Pasquali, announced “The Countess D’Albany.” Here was an honour which none but a Florentine could appreciate! (for all personal consequence is so local!) Madame D’Albany never paid visits to private individuals, never left her palace on the Arno, except for the English ambassador’s, or the Grand Duke’s. I had just time to whisper Mr. Moore, “The widow of the Pretender! your legitimate queen!—and the love of your brother poet, Alfieri;” and then came my turn to present my celebrated compatriot, with all his much more durable titles of illustration: so down we all sat, and “*fell to discourse.*”

I observe that great people, who have been long before the public, and feel, or fancy, they belong to posterity, generally make themselves agreeable to popular writers; and they are right; for what are the suffrages of a titled *coterie*, which can “bear but the breath and suppliance of an hour,” to the good opinion of those, whose privilege it is to confer a distinction, to awaken an interest

that vibrates to the remotest corner of the known world. Kings may give patents of nobility—genius only confers patents of celebrity. One line from an eminent writer will confer a more lasting dignity, than all the grand and arch dukes, that ever reigned from Russia to Florence, can bestow.

Madame D'Albany, already forgotten as the wife of the last of the royal Stuarts, will live as long as the language of Dante lasts, in the lines of Alfieri.

The Countess D'Albany could be the most agreeable woman in the world; and upon the occasion of this flattering visit, she was so. She could also be the most disagreeable; for, like most great ladies, her temper was uncertain; and her natural hauteur, when not subdued by her brilliant bursts of good humour, was occasionally extremely revolting. Still she loved what is vulgarly called fun; and no wit, or sally of humour, could offend her.

We had received very early letters from London, with the account of the king's death, (George the Third :) I was stepping into the carriage, to pay

Madame D'Albany a morning visit, when they arrived — and I had them still in my hand, on entering her library on the *rez-de-chaussée*, where I found her alone, and writing, when I suddenly exclaimed, with a French theatrical air,

“*Grande Princesse, dont les torts tout un peuple déplore,  
Je viens vous l'annoncer, l'Usurpateur est mort.*”

“What usurper!” asked Madame D'Albany, a little surprised, and not a little amused.

“*Madame, l'Electeur d'Hanovre cesse de vivre!*” The *mauvaise plaisanterie* was taken in good part; for, truth to tell, though the Countess D'Albany always spoke in terms of respect and gratitude of the royal family, and felt (or affected) an absolute passion for his present Majesty, whose picture she had, she was always well pleased that others should consider her claims to the rank of queen as legitimate, of which she herself entertained no doubts. She, however, affected no respect for a husband, whom, living, she had despised for his vices, and hated for his cruelty.

## IRISH RELIQUARIES.

ONE of the most curious Irish reliquaries extant is the Caah of the O'Donnells, still in the possession of that ancient family. I gave a description of it in my novel of 'O'Donnel,' which brought me, for the first and only time in my life, within the walls of a court of justice. The circumstance is illustrative of Irish manners and opinions, and is therefore worth relating. It should seem that a tradition had been handed down from the old times, forbidding, under some terrible 'Blue Beard' penalty, the indulgence of an unhallowed curiosity respecting the contents of the Caah; and that, in the memory of man, it had never been opened. When it was placed, with other family documents, in the custody of the Ulster king at arms, that gentleman, it was alleged, had, with the natural curiosity, the birth-right of the children of Eve, (who are all more or less Prys or Pandoras,) indulged himself with a peep into the

Caah ; for, else, how could Lady Morgan describe it ? It so happened that, though the lineal descendants of the O'Donnels have for some generations been Protestants, the eldest of its female members, and the immediate proprietress of the relic, still retained a fanciful and sentimental, if not a religious superstition on the subject ; and if the king at arms really looked into the box, he found at the bottom, not hope, but its antipodes--a law-suit ! The lady brought her action for the lost services of the mystery ; and I, who had received my information from the kindness (and general knowledge of such antiquities) of the defendant, was subpoenaed to prove that he was better acquainted with "such secrets in this farfel and box, which none must know," than he could be, from a mere external inspection.\* Fortunately for all the parties concerned, just as the cause was about to be called on, the good taste and timely intervention of the other and younger

\* Sir W. Betham is so learned in all that concerns Irish antiquities, that there could have been no difficulty whatever on his part, in guessing the contents of the Caah : such reliquaries were destined only to the one pious purpose.

members of this most respectable and excellent family, prevailed with the plaintiff to abate something of her resentment, and the dispute was settled *l'aimable*. The Caah contained only a mouldering piece of vellum, in all probability a copy of one of the gospels.

Another celebrated relic was the Caah or Corpua of the O'Briens. These portable shrines were devoted to the preservation of the holy volume, copies of which were formerly so precious and so rare in Ireland, that none but religious societies, or wealthy and noble families, could obtain them. Not only the gospels were difficult to be had, but persons sufficiently skilful in penmanship to copy them, could scarcely be found for any recompense. A learned clerk (Fra Dominick) engaged for this purpose by St. Cronan, refused to write longer than one day, from sun-rise to sun-set. In all times "*les grands talens se font prier.*"† St. Cronan, who "was Yorkshire too," closed with the agreement, having previously made a clandestine arrangement with the sun to shine uninter-

\* "Great talents require pressing."

ruptedly for forty days ; and the copyist, out-witted by the saint, was obliged to hold by his bargain. This, I believe, is the identical missal sent, in the superb Caah, as a donation to the Irish monastery at Ratisbon, by Tirdellagh O'Brien, King of Munster.

The gospel, thus sumptuously enshrined, was first inclosed in a case of the most durable wood, generally of yew or oak, which, in time, became as sacred as the holy deposit. It was then placed in a box of copper (the Caah) plated with silver or gold, embossed with precious stones and crystals, and covered with effigies of saints, angels, and scriptural devices. They were also marked with some inscription, such as that on the Caah of the O'Briens, which, as well as I remember, ran thus :—“ Thady O'Brien caused me to be gilt ; the Prince of Hy—, coadjutor of the Bishop, lately restored me ; and Shaneen, the artist, decorated me.”

The relies of antique times are always precious. They are the monuments of the barbarity, ignorance, and dupery, from which knowledge, by its powerful agent, the printing-press, is slowly re-

deeming us. Philosophy, no less than antiquarian research, is deeply interested in their conservation.

### THE CADENAS.

As a set-off against my barbarous Irish reliquary, the French *cadenas*, used at the royal table, in the Tuilleries, upon occasions of grand ceremony, is worth quoting. It is the *coffret* reserved expressly for the king, containing his salt-seller, cruets, plates, glasses, &c. &c., locked up under a *cadenas*, or padlock. Having had the honour to be present at the wedding-dinner (or supper) of the Duke de Berri, I made some inquiries, of an ultra friend who sat near me, as to this coffer, which was carried to the head of the table. “ ‘Tis an old custom,” she said, “and, in its origin, a precaution against poison.” “ What, in the good old times?” I said. She shrugged, and replied by the unanswerable “ *Que voulez-vous? les méchants sont de tous les temps!*”\*

\* “What would you have? There are scoundrels in all times.”

## TOFINO.

I WAS one day walking on the Piazza del Duomo, at Milan, with the Abbate Breme,\* when, passing near one of the lateral gates of the vice-regal palace, on our way to the post-office, he stopped, and patted a little dog on the head, which lay basking in the sun beside the sentry-box of the guard. He said, " You must know Tofino--his story is a romance—

*"Credo che il senta ogni gentil persona."*

\* Monseigneur Luize de Breme, ex-grand almoner of Italy, and son to the minister of the interior (of Sardinia), was one of those European characters whom to name, is to recall to the memory of all the most distinguished strangers who visited Milan. Eminently amiable and accomplished, he was a liberal patron of Italian literature, in all its branches; and he was at the head of the school of romanticism in Milan. He was the dear friend of Mademoiselle de Staél and her family, and of Monti, the poet, and he was intimately known to Lord Byron, Ugo Foscolo, and to most of the celebrated persons of Europe, whose opinions and writings favoured his peculiar sect in literature.

While the Abbate was speaking and caressing Tofino, who seemed to know him, and returned his caresses, several passengers, as they hurried on, either gave their *buon giorno* to the dog, or added a sympathizing *buona bestia!—povera bestia!* and some flung him a biscuit or other eatable. All noticed him.

“Tofino,” said Signor Breme, “is the most popular personage in all Lombardy. His merit is the only point upon which we all agree. Classicists and romantics, liberals and illiberals, alike accord their suffrages, and contribute their quota to the comforts of this *ancien militaire*. Tofino has made the terrible campaign of Russia, with equal honour to himself and fidelity to his master. He is a miracle of canine affection and intelligence !

“A dragoon in the Italian army, having reared him from a puppy, and taught him many ingenious tricks, was called off with his regiment to Spain. The dragoon had a dear friend, a sergeant in the *guardia reale*; and, in the *pressentiment* that he should never return, he bequeathed Tofino, with the old proverb, which is to be found in all languages—“As you love me, love my dog!”

"The guardsman took the bequest, as a matter of sentiment, became attached to the dog, and, in return, inspired Tofino with the most intelligent attachment: he went on his messages, kept sentry with him at the palace gate, and gave his possessor a sort of celebrity as *il padrone di Tofino*. The moment arrived when the Imperial Guard, with the Prince Eugene at its head, were called to join the fatal expedition to Russia. The sergeant and Tofino marched off together from the sunny plains of their native Lombardy, for the snowy deserts of Moscow. Tofino weathered out all the fatigues and dangers of that most fearful campaign —still beside his master in the march, in the battle, swimming with him across the icy fords, or following him through the smoking ruins of burnt villages. Tofino's master at last fell a victim, with nearly the whole of that splendid and gallant Italian legion, to whose valour and fidelity Buonaparte gave his testimony to the last hour of his life. The sergeant of the Imperial Guard, in the awful retreat from Moscow, was seen, for the last time, by one of his comrades and towns-men, sinking, after the passage of the Niemen,

near a frozen torrent, which he had passed with his dog. There he was left expiring; and as he was never heard of afterwards, there he probably died, with none to watch over his last agonies—but Tofino!

“ Long after the campaign of Russia was terminated, the neighbours of the *Piazza del Duomo*, when speaking of that disastrous event, which left the bones of so many of their gallant compatriots to whiten on the Russian soil, would still recal the fidelity of Tofino, whose last act of affection had been related by a surviving spectator.

“ One day, however, a wretched little animal was seen prowling about the *Palazzo Reale*, whose moans attracted general attention, and who, at last, laid himself down before the sentry-box at the lateral gate, to the left of the palace, from which to this period (now five years) he has never stirred. It was Tofino!—and neither force, nor caresses, nor the inclemency of the most inclement season, have proved sufficient to induce him to quit the spot where his master last did duty before the expedition, and where the sympathy of his master’s military brethren, and of the inhabitants of the

quarter of the *Piazza del Duomo*, have raised him this little *casino*, and daily provide for his wants and his comforts. The Milanese come from all parts to pay an occasional visit to Tofino, and to honour, in this faithful animal, that virtuous instinct of *elective affection* which Nature reproduces, under so many forms, throughout her system of universal love and beneficence!"

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## RELIGIONS.

ANY fool, who will attack a false religion, by opposing to it another as absurd as itself, will make converts and establish a sect. But he who opposes superstition by the demonstration of its contradictions, will excite universal abhorrence, and will hardly escape stoning.

Lucian, in his life of Alexander, the false prophet, relates that this mountebank prophesied at once against the Christians and against the Epicureans of Pontus, as being in a common hostility against himself and his pretensions.

In a similar spirit, certain writers of our own times accuse the reformed religion of atheism, or a tendency towards it. Gifford called every one atheist, in his *Quarterly Review*, whom he wanted to bring into disrepute. If, therefore, I were to define atheism, I should call it, the state of differing from any received mode of thinking in matters of religion, or in any thing else, where money or money's worth is concerned. The Epicureans and Christians of Pontus must have been a good deal surprised to find themselves in the same category ; and so, too, would many of Mr. Gifford's atheists.

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## TOWER OF BABEL.

THOSE who have a taste for allegorizing the Bible, may probably consider the builders of Babel as a set of disputatious metaphysicians, scaling Heaven by their inquiries into matter and spirit. Their punishment gives consistence to the fancy ; since nothing could foil them so much as a con-

fusion of language: as is proved by their descendants, who have been squabbling about words (mistaken for things) even down to the present day.

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### MATHEMATICAL LADIES.

I CAN perfectly understand Lord Byron's antipathy to mathematical ladies. There is nothing in the study of numbers analogous to female intellect, which is essentially imaginative. Female mathematicians are seldom what the French call *aimables*. In the middle of the last century, Newton's sublime discoveries rendered mathematics fashionable; and fashion will reconcile a French lady even to the mathematics. "*La belle Emilie*" of Voltaire, and Madame Ferrand, the friend and mistress of Condillac, are two of the most notable instances. The former translated and commented on Newton in the intervals of the gaming-table and the toilet; and the latter wrote a considerable part of the "*Traité des Sensations*," the well-known work of her philosophical lover. These, however, were exceptions, produced by the influence of the times.

The exact sciences are not made for woman. Her feelings are too petulant for cool, temperate calculation, in which fancy and sensibility go for nothing at all. When Nature, in her caprice, produces a Bolognese doctoress, really learned in such matters, the woman is sure to suffer by it.

The cleverest women are accused (and with some reason) of inaccuracy in their thoughts; but the defect does not arise (as some have imagined) from the want of the discipline of a course of mathematics. Madame de Staël was sometimes inconsequential in her reasoning; but neither she, nor many other female and non-mathematical writers of less power, have fallen into such “bald and disjointed” twaddle as is to be found in the pamphlets of some of our university polemics and politicians. “The high men,” as I am told they are called at Cambridge and Oxford, do not usually become the most distinguished statesmen and philosophers.

I suspect, therefore, that the current admiration for the mathematics, as an instrument of mental discipline, arises much more from the *safety* of such pursuits, and their disconnection with moral

and political interests, than from the rigor and exactness of their methods of argumentation. At the end of a five years' college course, the student is not more likely to question established abuses, than if he had spent the time in playing shuttlecock. His moral faculties have been kept perfectly quiescent. Indignation at public and private wrong, contempt for falsehood and dishonesty, the kindling glow of approbation at patriotic self-sacrifice, have remained unawakened and cold. The pursuit of abstractions has shut out all interest or feeling for realities; and the university whippers-in have trained the young hound quite away from the pursuit of forbidden truths.

A mere mathematician is the fittest raw material for manufacturing a passive-obedience parson, or an all-confiding country gentleman. Placed in the foreground of the world's great scene of action, the most accomplished of the class is but on a par with a mere land-surveyor: he can estimate quantities, and nothing more. With the sole exception of the inventors, (who, as in the other branches of knowledge, must be superior persons,) the greatest proficients in the mathematics are often the dullest

and least apprehensive of men; and as they mistake the superiority of their scientific methods, for their own aptitude to discover truth, they are the most presumptuous. These are the persons who sneer at lady writers, and imagine that there is no road to common sense and common observation, but over the Ass's Bridge.

Of mathematics, as a means to an end, as the hand-maid to the natural sciences, it would be absurd to speak slightly; but as a mere discipline, I fancy I am not singular in doubting their efficacy; and I am certain that, for the female mind in particular, they can do little beyond encouraging pedantry; while they blunt that rapid intuition which serves a woman better than reason, and gives to superior females the influence they have so often possessed on public affairs. In literature, more especially, it is this intuition, this promptitude to feel, rather than to analyze the truth, that has given not only their charm, but, I will add, their utility, to female writers. If they were more exact, they would be less striking. Their especial service is to keep alive the fervour of enthusiasm, and to avert the calculating selfishness

which is the besetting sin of advanced civilization. One day, complaining to a celebrated Irish wit of the faults of my early works, he replied, “Let them alone, child; it is to your faults you owe your success.”

### CARDINAL GONSALVI.

“Le joli rendez-vous qu'il m'a donné.”

MADAME DE MAINTENON.

*Mais! quel rendez-vous!* Doctrine of possibilities,—whoever should have predicted to me such an appointment some years back, when I was paddling about the bogs, and knocks, and slieus of the barony of Tireragh, and thinking Father Flynn, of Colooney (the Father John, *par parenthèse*, of my “Wild Irish Girl”), the greatest hierarch of the Catholic church extant—whoever, “*then and there*,” should have predicted to me that I should have given *rendez-vous* to an *eminenza*—a cardinal secretary—“a prince of the Roman church,”—one who governed *him*, whose predecessors governed the world—I should have believed the

prediction just as much, as the Brewer's Tub-woman, who married Lawyer Hyde, would have believed the man who might have prophesied her becoming the mother of a Duchess of York, and the grandmother of two queens of England ! And where did I give this notable *rendez-vous* ?—“*Je vous le donne en une--je vous le donne en quatre,*” as Madame de Sévigné says, in setting her daughter to guess who Mademoiselle was going to marry.—Why, in the church of the Quirinal, at Rome, and at the Cardinal’s request ! *Pardi*, my cardinal was none of your ordinary cardinals—none of your Cardinals, who “come with a whoop and come with a call,” and take a cover at your table, and fill your little anti-room with *la famiglia*,\* in tarnished liveries and coloured cotton neck-kerchiefs, smelling of the ends of candles, which smoke out of their fusty coat-pockets, and giving, very literally, a *mauvais odour* to the whole apartment.

The Cardinal, *par excellence*, the Cardinal Gonsalvi, was of another *étoffe* ! Sunday after

\* The household of the great families and cardinals of Rome are called *la famiglia*, or the family. A cardinal never drives or walks out, or pays a visit, without a train of liveried servants.

Sunday I had been gazing in awe on his terrible eyes, as they flashed on the whole Conclave, at the head of which he sat in the Pope's Chapel. There was something superhuman in those eyes! —something

“ That o'er-informed their tenement of clay.”

They are now beaming full on me from his most singular portrait, which, among a collection of singular portraits, and placed, as it is, between the original pictures of Alfieri and Byron, extinguishes all that surround it. They would do equally well in a personification of love or murder. Their master-expression was intense passion; but passion directed, not subdued, by craft.

I had heard a great deal of Gonsalvi in France, where he had resided much, and was well known. Talking him over with Denon, the night before we left Paris for Italy, he sketched off his character with his usual *finesse* of touch and accuracy of drawing —“ *Grand politique, et un peu libertin : d'ailleurs, homme très-aimable, et tant soit peu dangereux.*”\* Like all men of the temperament which goes to the

\* “ A great politician, and something of a libertine,—for the rest, an amiable man, but perhaps a little dangerous.”

highest order of genius, the Cardinal Gonsalvi was essentially liberal. What is called liberality is so purely the power of seeing clearly, and judging sagaciously, concerning the actual state of society—its wants, and its means—that able men must be liberal men, sooner or later. The ablest will not wait for the pressure of exigencies. There is something in the nerve, and sinew, and circulation of a man of genius, that forces him on with the age, and leaves him no power of election. Whenever the impulse is crossed or diverted by some private interest, some personal ambition, or individual view, his great career is checked. The "*En avant!*" of General Buonaparte was the true star of his glory—the return, the retrogradation to old systems and old forms, was the destruction of the emperor ! His alliance with the Gothic fabric of Hapsburg was the fatal conjunction that mouldered his new-raised fortunes to the dust. It was the baneful influence of the same *incubus* of illiberality and despotism which turned Gonsalvi from *his* high destiny, and made him a dependant, when he should have been a leader. Still, before he caught a view of the papal throne, through the power of Austrian

agency, he was so open, so bold in his expression of liberal opinions, not only in temporal but spiritual concerns, that he was suspected of being a member of some of those secret societies which (like the secret tribunal of old,) made even power tremble in its strongest fortress. By some, he was called the *Cardinal Carbonaro*; and *il giacobino* and *il radicale* were names publicly bestowed on one who soon silenced all imputations, by permitting the dungeons of the Papal State to be filled with the victims of that terrible political re-action, which followed close upon the *restoration* effected by the Holy Alliance.

Gonsalvi was, however, eminently superior to the time and persons under whose influence and power he acted; and his private agency and personal feelings were in perpetual opposition to the public part which, as first minister to Pope Pius the Seventh, he was obliged to act. Had he flourished in remoter times, he would have made a splendid Pope!—a something between Leo the Tenth and Ganganielli—showy, sumptuous and gallant as the first—uttered, liberal, and astute as the latter. As it was, he was chained to the fortunes

of his friend, the reigning pontiff—involved in a sort of inevitable dependence upon the dull despotism of Austria, and always *en butte* to the intrigues of the illiberal, and to the bigotry of the Conclave. Thus circumstanced, he had a part of infinite difficulty to perform. Had he been honest, he would have thrown it up; but he was a churchman, and, in his spiritual ambition, *prétre avant tout*. Still, so little did Gonsalvi participate in the *cugoterie* of his class or order—so little was he bound by prejudice or predilection to the ordinances of the church, that (like the archbishop of Taranto) he was opposed to the celibacy of the priesthood; and he suggested to Buonaparte, that, should the French government demand the liberty of marriage for the ministers of the Gallican church, the court of Rome would not make any objection. “*Parce que*” (to use his own words) “*ce n'était qu'un point de discipline.*”\* Buonaparte agreed with him on the advantage of such an innovation; and said that if

\* “Because it was but a point of discipline.”

he did not urge the point, it was simply because he would not give the *collets-montés* of the Faubourg St. Germain a pretence for calling the pope an heretic. The proposition and the rejoinder were curious and characteristic. Here, then, was a cardinal out of the “common roll” of cardinals ; and I went to Rome, desirous, but hopeless, of knowing him : for it was reported that he had ceased to hold assemblies, or to go to them, and that he was living in official retirement. So I soothed myself with Cardinal Fesch, who was all good humour and good nature ; and who allowed me to rummage about his most interesting palace, and admire his gallery and his pontifical toilette—his pictures by Raphael, and his point-laces, enough to make the mouths of Empresses water.

One fine Roman winter morning—(they very much resemble a summer’s day in Ireland)—the Duchess of Devonshire called on me, and, *sans préambule*, announced : the Cardinal Gonsalvi’s desire to make my acquaintance : but, though the duchess did not say as much, I saw there was some little difficulty about the where and the how of

this introduction. The cardinal was a minister of state, and I was ("audacious little worm!") the author of "France!" It was, therefore, rather a delicate matter for him to give me *rendez-vous* anywhere on this side the Styx. The Duchess, however, said she would let me know on the following day; and I received the following note, in answer to one I had sent with an inscription on a Roman brick, which I found in the well-known excavation, made by her grace round the column Phocas:—

" MY DEAR MADAM,

" I am not an Irishwoman; but I admire Irish talent and imagination, and we are certainly indebted to you for enabling us to judge of them. I return the stone, or brick, with all the rights that I might have to it, and am flattered by the inscription.\* I also send you the edition of the Fifth Satire of Horace, and am truly gratified by your praise of it. If you will go to the Quirinal chapel on Thursday, I shall have an opportunity of pre-

\* A few lines written by the author, who had supposed the daughter of the Bishop of Derry to have been an Irishwoman.

senting you to Cardinal Gonsalvi. I shall go about eleven.

“ Pray believe me very much yours,

“ ELIZABETH DEVONSHIRE.”

“ If you wish to go to the chapel to-morrow, (Thursday,) I will call for you a little before eleven, and for Sir Charles also. If the Cardinal stops to speak to me, I shall present you, &c. &c.”

I forget what was the *grande cérémonie* celebrated on the abovementioned day at the Quirinal; but it was one of singular magnificence. The Duchess of Devonshire had the privilege of places devoted to the families of the Cardinals, and we commanded a full view of that splendid church, which, like the Temple of the Sun, whose site it occupies, was all light, lustre, and effulgence. The central nave was thronged with the dignitaries of the church, in grand costume, abbots, priors, and monsignori—

“ Black spirits and white, blue spirits and grey.”

The tribunes were filled with representatives of the beauty and fashion of Europe, from the

Niemen to the Thames. The pope was on his throne ; the conclave sat beneath him, in vestments of eastern amplitude and splendour ; while at their feet were ranged their humble *caudatori*. The pope pontificated ; and when the censers had flung their odours on the air, and the loud hosannas had ceased to peal, a procession began, which was one of the most imposing I ever beheld. The pope, borne aloft on his moveable throne, and on the necks of his servants, appeared like some idol of pagan worship. The members of the conclave, two by two, followed ; their trains of violet velvet, held up by the *caudatori*. The whole spectacle passed on, and, half way down the great vestibule which precedes the chapel, disappeared among its lofty and massive columns. The Cardinal Secretary then broke off from the line of march, and joined us, as we stood under the shadow of a pillar.

The presentation was as unceremonious, as the conversation which ensued was pleasant, easy, and *spirituel*. We talked of France, and the persons we mutually knew there ; and I saw that there was a playful attempt to draw me out on the subject of Rome and the actual order of things in Italy, more

flattering than fair, and which I parried as well as I could. Before we parted, he proposed, with great politeness, calling on us the following day; but, as we were lodged (as were many of our betters) *au vingt-cinquième*, I declined the honor till after our return from Naples.

Cardinal Gonsalvi conversed in French like a Parisian, and his phrases were epigrammatic and well turned. As we stood in the partial shadow of one of the great columns, with some streaks of bright light falling from a high window on the rich robes and diamond buckles of his eminence, I was struck by the oddity of the group. The fine figure and countenance, and magnificent costume of the Roman Cardinal,—the sybil air and look of the British peeress, whose tall, slight form, wrapt in a black velvet mantle, surmounted by a black hat, and one sweeping feather, such as Rubens would have delighted to copy,—and my own “Little Red-riding-hood” appearance (as Irish as if I had never left the banks of the Liffey)—and again, the true impersonation of all that is most English in physiognomy and *tournure* in my English husband—it was a picture to fill the canvas of a Callot or a Caravaggio! What was most odd in

all this, was the conjunction of personages so apparently incongruous. This could not have happened fifty years back. What effected it now? The “march of intellect!” with its seven-league boots, like those of the Marquis of Carabas! Ochone! a little wild Irish woman to march from the banks of the Bog of Allan, to hold a colloquy sublime on the banks of the Tiber, on the *Mons Quirinalis*, with a Roman Cardinal.—That is a march with a vengeance!

## FRENCH POETRY.

“**E**VERY body,” says sturdy Johnson, “has a right to say what he likes, and every body has a right to knock him down for it;”—a canon of criticism, of which the disputants of our days have not been slow to avail themselves. As far, at least, as a virtual and constructive knock-down blow is concerned, it is the favourite syllogism of reviewers, pamphleteers, and parliamentary orators. For my own part, I have always said what I liked, and I have been knocked down for it pretty often, from Pontius to Pilate; that is, from Gifford to Croly.

I am rather popular, I flatter myself, in France ; and yet the French have never pardoned my scepticism with respect to the unrivalled poetical merits of Racine ; and they have not always sparred with the gloves on, in their application of the Johnsonian maxim to my case. Still I say, that Racine is no poet, according to our northern ideas of poetry. The French are too apt to mistake rhymes and rhetoric for poetry. A French gentleman, in speaking of a young Parisian Sappho, said to me, the other day, "*Elle fait des vers comme un ange !*"\* Making verses, however, is not writing poetry ; and the very phraseology demonstrates a rooted difference in the ideas of the two nations on the subject.

Generally speaking, French poetry is but metrical prose. Stripped of its rhymes, and released from the ties of measure, there is little in it of that imagery, in which we imagine poetry to consist. I should say, in my ignorance, that Béranger is the truest living poet of his country. His writings are in character with the genius, and language, and temperament of his nation, which is essentially witty, intellectual,

\* \* She makes verses like an angel."

full of philosophy and thought ; and I would rather have written one verse of one of his delightful patriotic songs, than a whole volume of *Henriades* and *Jardins*.

It is no bad compliment to a nation, to say that it is not poetical. The finest poets have flourished in the most barbarous times. When the people know nothing, they are thrown upon the exaggerations of fancy ; and the poverty of a language is among the most pregnant occasions of poetical diction. Homer, Hesiod, David, Ossian, Dante, Chaucer, are among the greatest poets extant ; yet, in what times did they write ! The structure of the French language, also, with its mute vowels, surrounds the mere fabric of verse with such difficulties, as are only to be conquered by a laborious study. The nation, therefore, is more struck by the merit of style, than of matter ; and the habits of the Parisians are so alien from all acquaintance with nature—so tied down to conventional notions and feelings, that a Schiller or a Shakspeare would not be understood by them. Above all, the dread of ridicule, the predominant vice of the French *morale*, effectually prevents an indulgence in those

*élan* of sentiment, without which genuine poetry, in the English sense of the word, cannot exist. The fact is, that the standard of excellence is not the same in London and Paris ; and international criticism is pretty much the dispute of the two knights, respecting the colour of the shield, of which they did not see the same side.

### IDLENESS OF GENIUS.

I SAID, not long since, to Mr. \*\*\*, “ Nobody tolerates, or even likes, a thorough-going, genuine, conscious coxcomb, more than I do—one who has taken up the profession coolly and deliberately, like the Brummels, &c. &c. of old. But I cannot stand your friend: he is such a dull dandy, and nothing but a dandy.”

“ No, I assure you,” was the reply; “ he is by no means deficient. He has, on the contrary, considerable talent; but he is so indolent. How often do you see great talents rendered inefficient by indolence !”

“ Yes, you do,” I said; “ it is a pity.” But,

suddenly struck with the absurdity, I observed, “ What nonsense we are talking. One goes on for ever repeating common places, without reflection. You know, as well as I do, that great talents and indolence are physically incompatible. Vitality, or all-aliveness—energy, activity, are the great elements of what we call talents.”

The idleness of genius is a mere *platitudo*. Bacon, Shakspere, Milton, Voltaire, Newton, all who have enlightened and benefitted the world, have been no less remarkable for their labour, than for their genius. Physical activity may exist without mind; but the man of talent cannot be idle, even though he desire it; he is mastered by his moral energy, and pushed into activity, whether he will or not. I know not a better instance of the industry and energy of talent, than my friend Shiel. A leader of the great national army of the disqualified, and obliged to a perpetual study and practice of the tactics of defence and offence—a lawyer of considerable business—an orator, standing alone, not only in his own country, where so many are eloquent, but in his age and in Europe—a dramatic writer, long ranked among the first of his day,—he adds to these

sources of occupation, which are not sufficient to exhaust his unwearied industry, his frequent contributions to the New Monthly Magazine—those brilliant and fanciful sketches, which, though thrown out in moments of relaxation, are, for graphic delineation and picturesque colouring, equal to the best pages, which have made the reputation of Sir W. Scott.

Then again, there is O'Connell, the head and front of all agitation, moral, political, social, and legal. When we read in the papers those eloquent and powerful speeches, in which the spectres of Ireland's oppression are called up from the depths of history, with a perfect knowledge of all that has concerned the country from its earliest records, and in which unnumbered “modern instances” of misrule, in all its shades of ignorance and venality, are collected from the storehouse of his capacious memory,—those speeches in which, amidst the fiery explosions of long nurtured indignation, (the petulant outpourings of constitutional impatience,) arguments of logical conviction, and facts of curious detail, come forth, as from an exhaustless fountain,—who but would sup-

pose that the life of the patriot, demagogue, and agitator, was occupied exclusively in the one great and absorbing cause? It is, however, on his way home from the courts, and after legal labours, that have occupied him from the dawn of light, that, (as if to escape from the homage which haunts his steps,) he turns into the Catholic Association—it is after having set a jury-box in a roar by his humour, made “butchers weep” by his pathos, driven a witness to the last shift of Irish evasion, and puzzled a judge by some point of law, not dreamed of in his philosophy, that, all weary and exhausted as he must be, he mounts the rostrum of the Corn Exchange, the *Jupiter Tonans* of the Catholic senate; and, by those thunderbolts of eloquence, so much more effective to hear than to read, kindles the lambent light of patriotism to its fiercest glow, and with “fear of change perplexes” Brunswick clubs and Orange lodges.\*

Again, this boldest of demagogues, this mildest of men, “from Dan to Beersheba,” appears

\* Insigne mætis præsidium reis,  
Et consulenti, Pollio, curiaæ.

HORAT. l. 2, Ode 1.

in the patriarchal light of the happy father of a happy family, practising all the social duties, and nourishing all the social affections. It is remarkable, that Mr. O'Connell is not only governed by the same sense of the value of time as influenced Sir Edward Coke, but literally obeys his injunctions for its partition, which forms the creed more than the practice of rising young lawyers. It is this intense and laborious diligence in his profession, that has won him the public confidence. Where his abilities as a lawyer may be serviceable, party yields to self-interest ; and many an inveterate ascendancy man leaves his friends, the Orange barristers, to hawk their empty bags through the courts, while he contributes his official gains indirectly to the Catholic rent, by assigning to Catholic talent the cause which Catholic eloquence can best defend.

Then, as we are on the subject of the association, there is another of its distinguished members, Thomas Wyse, an antiquarian, linguist, traveller, artist, scholar, painter, and author, no less than an orator and a politician. What industry, what application, what energy must have gone to make

up all this acquirement ! In a careless and desultory conversation, Mr. Wyse will throw out as much, and as varied knowledge, as would qualify some noble pedant for the chair of what Horace Walpole calls “ the old ladies’ society.” Without the aptitude for labour, nothing great ever was or ever will be produced. Poets talk of inspiration ; but their finest passages are uniformly the result of the deepest study. Even Sheridan, the man of eminence most quoted for his idleness, has left proofs behind him of the intensity of the effort by which his inimitable comedies were elaborated ; and his biographer and countryman might bear his own personal evidence to the great truth, that not even the slightest and most sparkling effusions of the muse, are emancipated from this great governing law of excellence. The supposition of amazing talents, latent in the capabilities of indolent triflers, is like the theory of those elaborate and ingenious machines for producing perpetual motion, which are extremely surprising and admirable, but which labour under a small practical disadvantage, that—they do not perform.

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## FRANKNESS.

NOTHING wins on the affections more than that frank and generous disposition which, ever ready to risk itself for others, may excite the derision of the crafty and designing, but has an unfailing advocate in the self-love of society. The manœuvrer, male or female, may deceive for a time--obtain admirers by a plausible exterior, make dupes, and secure dependants ; but such persons win no friends, excite no confidence. The cold and crafty Octavius, with all his power, had no devoted intimates of the heart; while Cæsar, with all his crimes, and Anthony, with all his vices, won, by their generous and unreserved dispositions, the affections of all who approached them. He who in his patriotism had said, that "he could neither be false to the republic nor survive it,"\* was yet

\* " Nam neque deesse, neque superesse reipublicæ volo."

devoted to Cæsar, whose captivating affability and generous temper were irresistible ; and many a stern republican relaxing his severity, and, surrendering his feelings to Anthony, suffered the sophistry of the affections to master the graver impressions of patriotism.

“ Mark Anthony I served, who best was worthy  
Best to be served : whilst he stood up and spoke,  
He was my master, and I wore a life  
To spend upon his hater.”

The two great captains of antiquity seem to have possessed singular arts of fascination ; while of the two great captains of modern times, one only excelled in that species of *bonhomie*, which lays contributions on the hearts of the multitude, often dangerous to their rights and happiness. Napoleon Buonaparte—stern at the Tuileries, where he was surrounded by those whom he knew to be despicable, and whom he had proved to be corrupt—when in the midst of his soldiers, gave a full, free scope to his frank and *brusque* cordiality. The idol of his troops, had he trusted to their affection and their fealty, he would not have fallen a victim to the treachery of that false *grade*, which he himself had the folly to

create, and which contributed as mainly to his destruction, as the diplomacy of foreign cabinets, and the force of foreign bayonets.

The craft of the manœuvrer lies essentially in the narrowness of his faculties. It is rarely that a cold and selfish heart is accompanied by extensive views, and an enlarged intellect. The manœuvrer, engrossed by the cunning of detail, has no thought for the wisdom of the complex; his scope is a succession of paltry temporary objects, each of which, in its turn, absorbs his whole attention, and is pursued without reference to its relative importance, or to the influence which the means employed in its attainment may have on the future. He sacrifices character to win some dishonest trifle, and parts with a friend on the slightest expediency. Conscious, too, of the artifice of his combinations, and the falsehood of his pretences, he cannot inspire a conviction that he does not feel; and the caution and circumspection which attend all his movements, becoming infectious, inspire an instinctive suspicion in the minds on which he operates.

For this reason, the mere diplomatist makes the

worst of ministers. The “finessing and trick,” which are the soul of his enterprizes, serve but to isolate him, and never carry the public along with them. Whereas the bold, the generous, the uncalculating, and, it may be, the imprudent statesman, communicates the fire of his own volition to those around him, and seizes with an irresistible impulse, the sympathies of the people.

By the simple enchantment of a constitutional frankness, and an innate veracity, the Marquis of Anglesea, in eight short months, unmarked by any decided ministerial measure, unconsciously captivated a nation’s love. With

“A soul as sure to charm as seen,”

which

“Boldly steps forth, nor keeps a thought within,”

he impressed upon public opinion a conviction, which nothing could shake, of the honesty of his purpose. His word, like truth, carried its evidence along with it. The fiercest passions were calmed at his bidding; and the swelling waters of political agitation subsided, even while the winds were yet raging that had lashed them into fury.

## MANŒUVRERS.

ON the subject of a *female manœuvrer* whole volumes might be written, for woman goes so much more into detail than man. One or two samples present themselves at this moment, in the list of my own acquaintance, which leave even Miss Edgeworth's admirable portrait far behind. These creatures, not only in their most trivial actions, “*pèsent l'apparent, le doux, et le possible,*” but, by the very depth and intricacy of their calculations, their “*politiques aux choux et aux raves,*” defeat the purpose they wish to effect, by the means they take to accomplish it. I have one of these *manœuvriers* at present before me;—here she goes! —But, here is a bill of fare to write, and though character will keep cool—cooks won’t. So “*revénons à notre mouton.*” It is quite horrible how housekeeping crosses authorship. What fame may I not have forfeited, by getting up a dinner instead of a book!

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## WONDERFUL CHILDREN, AND GOOD MOTHERS.

‘So wise, so young, they say do ne’er live long.’

*Richard III.*

IT is a curious fact, that in the present times we have none of those precocious prodigies, so numerous in the olden time. It seems to have been one of the peculiar privileges of the wisdom of our ancestors, to produce those infant miracles of learning and science, the “admirable Crichtons” of the nursery, who studied in cradles, and lectured from go-carts. “I was not” (says the quaint, but most amusing Mr. Evelyn,) “initiated into any rudiments, till I was *four* years old; and then, one Friar taught us, at the church door of Wotton!” This “*till I was four years old,*” marks his conviction of his own backwardness, in comparing him-

self with other children of his age, and times ; but it was more particularly in reference to the superior wit, talent, and learning of his own son, at that early period of his brief existence, who was, to use his afflicted father's words, a “ prodigy for wit and understanding.” A prodigy, indeed ! for, “ at two years and a half old, he could perfectly read any of the English, French, Latin, and gothic characters, pronouncing the three first languages exactly,” &c. &c.

The termination of this most short, splendid, and unnatural career is worth marking :—“ He died,” (says Evelyn) “ at five years, after six fits of quartan ague, with which it pleased God to visit him ; though, in my opinion, he was suffocated by the women and maids who tended him, and covered him too hot with blankets, as he lay in a cradle, near an *excessive hot fire*, (in a quartan fever !)—I suffered him to be opened, when they found he was what is vulgarly called, livergrown !” What a picture !—what a history of the times, the state of science, and the wisdom of our ancestors ! In the first instance, the attributing an infliction to the divine visitation, which was at the same time

assignable to vulgar nursery maids, and hot blankets. In the next, the vain father not perceiving that the genius of his child was but disease, and his supernatural intelligence only the unnatural development of faculties, most probably produced by mal-organization, which the style of his rearing and education was so calculated to confirm. “ Before his fifth year, he had not only skill to read most written hands, but to decline all nouns, conjugate the verbs, regular and irregular, learned out “ *Puerilis*,” got by heart almost the entire vocabulary of Latin and French primitives, could make congruous syntax, turn English into Latin, construe and prove what he had read, knew the government and use of relatives, verbs, substantives, ellipses, and many figures and tropes, and made a considerable progress in Comonius’s “ *Janua*,” and had a strong passion for Greek.”

This is too frightful—it makes one shudder to transcribe it. Such, however, was the education, by which an accomplished and really knowing parent, (knowing for the age in which he lived,) hesitated not to hurry his wonderful child to an untimely grave.

Such, however, were the times, when learn-

ing was dearly prized, and knowledge little diffused ; when monastic universities, founded by the church, through the influence of its royal and noble dependants, were the sole depositaries of the little that was known, worth the labour of acquiring ; and when the most learned of the community had less solid practical information, than the operative mechanics of the present day. Such were the times when plague, pestilence, and famine, were events of ordinary occurrence ; when corruption in morals, and baseness in politics flourished, even to the extent of surrounding a king at the altar of his God, with the ministers of his vices ; and converting the “brightest,” and the “wisest,” into the worst and meanest of mankind. These were the times of the most brutal ignorance in the people, and the greatest profligacy in the nobility ; and, these were the times that produced such learned little prodigies as young Evelyn, under a system of education calculated to make such prodigies ; but not to form citizens for a free state, nor legislators for a great nation.

Whatever may have been the natural abilities of this poor child, to have made such a progress

in the learned languages, at five years old, he must have been the object and victim of a very laborious system of study, all applied to the exercise of his memory. He must therefore have submitted to close confinement in warm rooms, to the privation of air and exercise, and to a sedentary and cramped position ; and he was probably much injured by the gross habit of eating, and the want of personal purity, so remarkable in an age, when meat was devoured three or four times a day, even by the most dainty, and when general ablutions were resorted to, more as a remedy than a daily habit.

The overworking of the brain at the expense of all the other functions, must also have had a fatal effect even on children of robust temperaments ; and the Indian practice of flinging their offspring into the sea, to sink or swim, as strength or feebleness decided, was humanity and civilization, to the system pursued in times quoted with such approbation—a system by which infant intelligence was tortured into intellectual precocity, and hurried to an early tomb, under the precipitating concurrences of “maids, women, hot blankets, and excessive hot fires.”

What is most notable in all this is, that Mr. Evelyn, the father of the unfortunate infant, was one of the cleverest and most advanced men of his time, and much celebrated for his translation of, and his essay prefixed to, the "*Golden Book*" of St. Chrysostom, "*concerning the Education of Children.*"

But if Mr. Evelyn was misled by "all the vulgar errors of the wise," where was the mother's instinct? Alas, where a mother's instincts often are, in her vanity and her weakness. Mrs. Evelyn was one of the most accomplished women of the Court of Charles the Second; and one of the few virtuous women who frequented it. She was a celebrated linguist and artist, and her works in oil and miniature are frequently quoted with pride by her husband. Yet she permitted disease to creep insidiously on the infancy of her child, while he was learning the Latin and Gothic characters, and giving to studies beyond his strength those hours which should have gone to air, exercise, and timely repose. Finally, she consigned him to the superintendence of her maids and women; and, worse than all, hurried on his death by surrounding him

with circumstances calculated to produce it,—because that rational information necessary to all mothers, was not on the category of her acquirements. How many mothers, even in these march of intellect times, have stopped short with Mrs. Evelyn; whose judgment should take the lead of the gratification of feeling and vanity?—and be it observed, that mothers in general mistake their own indulgence for their children's; and have quite as much pleasure in stuffing pounds of plum cake down the throats of their over-fed masters Gobbleton Mowbray, as the masters Gobbleton enjoy in its deglutition.

“The Temple of Nature is the heart of a mother,” says Kotzebue, in his sentimental jargon; but there are various temples; and Nature is a very capricious deity. What was she in the heart of Lady Macclesfield, and in a thousand other mothers, who have abandoned their children to want or infamy, or to neglect, and the influence of their own bad examples, whose results pursue their offspring through life?

The more or less powerful instinct of maternity is an affair of temperament, nurtured or modified

by other instincts or passions, and by circumstances favourable or unfavourable to its existence. The bird that flies at the invader of its nest—the tigress that gathers its young under it, and darts its murderous glance at all who attempt to interfere with the objects of its affections, is more respectable than any one of these mothers “upon instinct,” who are only that. • It is not the instinct, or feeling, but the judgment that directs it, which is laudable. Maternity is no abstraction; and when people say, “such a one is injudicious, or ignorant, or feeble, or shallow, but she is a good mother,” they talk nonsense. That which the woman is, the mother will be; and her personal qualities will direct and govern her maternal instinct, as her taste will influence her appetite. If she be prejudiced and ignorant, the *good mother* will mismanage her children; and if she be violent in temper and vehement in opinion, the *good mother* will be petulant and unjust towards them: if she be inconsistent and capricious, she will alternate between fits of severity and bursts of indulgence, equally fatal: if she be vain, and coquettish, and selfish, she may be fond of her children through

her pride, but she will always be ready to sacrifice their enjoyments, and even their interests, to the triumphs of her own vanity, or the gratification of her egotism.

The perfection of motherhood lies, therefore, in the harmonious blending of a happy instinct, with those qualities which make the good member of general society—with good sense and information—with subdued or regulated passions, and that abnegation, which lays every selfish consideration at the feet of duty. To make a good mother, it is not sufficient to seek the happiness of the child, but to seek it with foresight and effect. Her actions must be regulated by long-sighted views, and steadily and perseveringly directed to that health of the body and of the mind, which can alone enable the objects of her solicitude to meet the shocks and rubs of life with firmness, and to maintain that independence, in practice and principle, which sets the vicissitudes of fortune at defiance, fitting its possessor to fill the various stations, whether of wealth or poverty, of honour or obscurity, to which chance may conduct him.

This is my idea of the duties of maternity,

and of the perfection of that most perfect creature, a good mother. I know it is not everybody's idea, and that there is another *beau idéal* of maternity, which is much more prevalent.

There is the good mother, that spends half her life in hugging, flattering, and stuffing her child, till, like the little Dalai Lama of Thibet, he thinks he has come into the world for no other purpose than to be adored like a god, and crammed like a capon. This is the good mother, who, in her fondness, is seen watching anxiously, after a long late dinner, for the entrance of the little victim which she has dressed up for sacrifice, and whose vigils are prolonged beyond its natural strength, that it may partake of the poisonous luxuries in the last service of the feast of ceremony, till the fever of over excitement mounts to its cheek, sparkles in the eye, and gives incoherency to its voluble nonsense; an excitement to be followed not by the deep and dreamless sleep of infancy, but by the restless slumbers and fearful visions of indigestion. Alas for the mother and for the child! and alas for the guests called upon for their quota of admiration upon such melancholy occasions, such terrible exhibitions of human vanity

and human weakness, counteracting the finest instincts of human nature !

Clever and truth-telling Miss Edgeworth—you who have written such rational and charming books for children—why have you not written some *easy lessons* for their mothers? Why have you not composed a manual for their use, to teach them a few elementary facts in physics and in morals ; and, above all, to teach them that nature, in all things, is the sole basis of right thinking and right acting, under all circumstances, and in all times ? Did mothers know and feel this, what sorrows and disappointments might be spared to their hearts and their hopes, to their affections and their ambition ; what time, now given to acquire arts, for which nature has refused the requisite organization, might be dedicated to health, and what lives might be spared, whose loss, (attributed sacrilegiously to “the will of God,”) has only been a sacrifice to “maids, women, hot blankets, excessive hot fires,” and the ignorance, and prejudices, and selfish fondness of the “best of mothers.”

## TOYS AND TRINKETS.

“ Parfaits dans le petit—sublimes en bijoux—  
 Grands inventeurs de riens, nous faisons des jaloux.”  
*Voyage à Berlin.*

I SHOULD like to know if the march of intellect has any thing to do with the indifference which the children of our day shew for toys. The Mrs. Chenevixes, and the *petits Dunkerques* of modern times would be ruined and undone, if it were not for the papas and mammas, whose *boudoirs* and dressing-rooms are the only baby-houses to be found in modern mansions.

The witty, the gallant M<sup>r</sup>urquis de Sévigné was called by his mother “ *le roi des bagatelles*,” from his love of *bijouterie*; and Lord — might be called the emperor. His pipes and snuff-boxes alone might entitle him to the imperial grade in the sovereignty of trifles: while Lady — is the very

Catherine of Russia of trinkets, and autocrat of the toy-shop. There is not a useless utility, a superfluous superfluity, that ingenuity can devise for the amusement of idleness, which may not now be found on the tables of the great, and the imitators of their present rage for toys:—gold scissors that do not cut; silver needles that do not sew; pearl pen-knives that mend no pens; and work-boxes that hold no work save clock-work; *fagots* that never burn; and *allumettes* that are never to be lighted: with a hundred devices in gems and jewels, which it must have taken some poetical talent, and more poetical fancy than goes to half the sonnets and “*lines*” that we read, or at least pay for, to invent.

All this seems very frivolous; but then these “trifles light as air” are sometimes important enough in their results: for, if such fairy favours are occasionally bestowed by tributary friends, they are sometimes the insidious offerings of concealed admirers; who tell in toys, what words dare not utter; and give the history of a passion in a series of trinkets, which, if hearts of turquoise, and seals of emeralds could speak, would be

found more than circumstantial evidences in Doctors' Commons.

That *petites-maitres*, and *petites-maitresses* should thus “trifle life away,” and occupy their time and money like children, may not appear so very extraordinary; but that literary women—intellectual women—women who affect to think, and presume to write—and publish too, and make head against such organs of opinion as Quarterly Reviews, and the like—that *they* should give themselves the airs of fashionable frivolity, and endeavour to reconcile “*les goûts d'un grand seigneur, et les revenus d'un poète,*” is really “too bad.” It is, however, a fair example of the incongruities of character, and the influence of vogue. What would the Scuderies, and the Daciers, and the Carters, and the Montagus say to the toy-shop house of a certain forty-volume-power female writer of the present day, who, if she has not written as well, has written as much, as those three voluminous ladies combined? What a disappointment to blue-stockings visitors, who expect to find her in the midst of that charming literary litter, intellectual disorder, and elegant

neglect of all the elegancies of ordinary life, which marked the *ménages* of the *femmes-savantes* of the late and preceding centuries!—the broken tea-cup (substituted for a wine-glass) of Mary Wolstonecraft! or the Scotch mull and brown pocket-handkerchief of Catherine Macauley!! What a shock to hear this quarto authoress talk of *esprit de rose* instead of *l'esprit des lois*; to find the atmosphere of her drawing-room perfumed by a *jardin* of fresh flowers, whose odour, she pretends, has the same effect on her brain as sherries had upon Falstaff's, “driving thence all the dull and crudly vapours, which environ it!”

How their literary Fustinesses of former times would turn up their intellectual noses at the frivolous tastes of this new-light *Armande*, could they see her, as I see her at this moment, writing at a rose-wood *secrétaire*, accommodating and pliant as any *secrétaire* or the list of diplomacy, and “seizing,” literally, not figuratively, (like Anna Matilda) her “golden quill.” There she sits, surrounded by the inspiring semblances of deathless wits and immortal beauties, shining from

enamels durable as their fame—by bookcases, that glitter in gilt vellum and rosy russet—with Dante illustrated on Sevre vases, and the loves of Petrarch and Laura told on tea-cups. Which of the coroneted muses of the present *saturnalia* of Parnassus, where cooks and countesses jostle for precedence, does this sketch pourtray? Which of the Lady Charlottes and the Honourable Annas, who affect new patents of distinction, and think more of the honour bestowed by their publisher, than their pedigree, does this cap fit? Not one; for this literary *petite-maitresse*—this amateur of frivolities, and inditer of philosophy—this collector of French toys, and collator of Irish chronicles—this trifler by taste, and author by necessity,

“Cet homme-là, Sire—c'est moi!”\*

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\* Opposed to this frivolous picture, take the picture of a celebrated German authoress, as described by a recent traveller:—

“DESCRIPTION OF A GERMAN LITERARY LADY.—Never shall I forget the first appearance, to me, of Madame de B. She was sitting, or rather reclining, in the most unaffected posture, with her legs crossed, and her hands clasped behind her head, on a large sofa—one old, indeed, and crazy, but doubtless endeared to her by some association, perhaps with the days of her childhood; for, from its colour, and dilapidations, and fashion, it could scarcely be more modern. Behind her, and on each side, extended a floor, or rather

I don't defend this passion for trifles—I only expose it, as an illustrative item in the history of female authorship, which is so often reproached with a slovenly neglect of all that is feminine and frivolous.

When somebody presented the celebrated Mademoiselle Scuderie with a bunch of pretty seals, she refused them, deeming them derogatory to the dignity of a "*Fille Savante*," as she is called by Menage—so she sent them back with a couplet, observing,

“ Car enfin des jolis cachets  
Demandent des jolis secrets,  
Ou du moins des jolis billets.”

ocean of books, rising in volumes, like wave upon wave, tossing and tumbling, and some, as it were, foaming open, and revealing their white margins. In the midst of these, like an island, stood a large old-fashioned mahogany table, covered with various articles, which I might forbear to enumerate, if it were not interesting to the sensible mind to learn even the most trifling attributes of genius. Such persons will readily forgive me that I mention a large black tea-pot, tea-cup of antique China, an ink-stand, with the owner's cipher, apparently scratched on the metal; a pair of saucers, of divers patterns; a large phial labelled “ laudanum;” a tortoise-shell watch-case, a small plate of bread crusts, and a long hair comb, a tall wine-glass half filled with sugar of the brown description, a snuff-box, a pair of snuffers, a small miniature, a few twisted fragments of brown and blue paper, two slender candles, some small pieces of copper coin, and a single stocking, marked D.R.A.B.”

It is odd enough that I should be thus blamed for my love of trifles and of truth—and for pursuing both, in my public and private life, with an earnestness, which at least attests my sincerity, if it does not prove my judgment. “*On ne saurait avoir trop de fantaisies, musquées ou non musquées,*” says Madame de Sévigné. This is also my creed: for I hold, that whatever cheers us on in the arduous path of life, and flings a flower over its dreariness—whatever innocently employs and safely recreates—whatever gives an object, or an amusement, “soberly,” (as Lady Grace has it,) is worth cultivating, even although it be but a taste for toys. When, therefore, one cannot command a box at the opera, it is well to be able to command a box from Bautte!\* When one cannot enjoy Rossini in full orchestra, it is a privilege to hear his best symphonies played on one’s writing-desk or work-table — and when denied the enchantments of Pasta and Pisaroni, it is pleasant still to hang upon tones, which, like theirs, seem to proceed from no “*mortal mixture of earth’s mould*”—fairy strains, played, as it

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\* Mons. Bautte, the celebrated bijoutier of Geneva.

were, by fairy fingers, on fairy instruments, made and moulded "*par quelque araignée du voisinage.*" Sensible women, I know, laugh at all this. Still, a woman should be "*femme avant tout;*" and she who is not so, more or less, is not a fair and perfect specimen of her sex.

The great always love toys. Even heroes are not above them. That gallant Centaur, Prince Potemkin, had the finest collection of *joujoux* of any grown gentleman on record; and Catherine the Great was wont to reward his devotion and his services, alternately, by trinkets and principalities, or to appease his jealousy by a government or a toy—

“Pleurez, pleurez, petit enfant—  
Vous aurez votre moulin-à-vent.”

The Russian “*petit enfant*” was often found seated before a mountain of baby-things, in his military pavilion, by the Prince de Ligne, who has left such a pleasant description of the scene, and so wittily recorded the fact.

By far the prettiest toy I ever read or heard of, and the most appropriate for the baby-house

of a literary lady, was one invented by Madame de Théanges, the sister of Madame de Montespan; and presented by that beautiful and *mondaine* Abbess, to the Duc de Maine, as an *étrenne*, in 1675.

This exquisite toy represented one of the royal apartments of Versailles, richly gilt and decorated—a state-bed occupied an alcove, and was surrounded by a gilt balustrade. In a *grand fauteuil*, within the precincts, sat the young prince, shewing a copy of adulatory verses to the Duc de la Rochefoucauld, who stood beside him; while behind his chair was placed the celebrated Bossuet, and the Prince de Marsiliac. Two ladies, who had also the privilege of the *ruelle*, sat reading within the alcove. These were the charming Madame de la Fayette, and Madame de Théanges, whose beauty was set off by her religious habit, as Abbess de Fontrevault. Immediately without the balustrade stood Racine and Boileau—the former beckoning in the modest La Fontaine, who stood timidly at the door—the latter, with a pitch-fork, humorously affecting to

keep off a crowd of bad poets, who were forcing their way to the presence and patronage of the young prince.

The merit and the value of this superb toy was, that all these figures were accurate portraits, exquisitely done in wax, and presented by the illustrious originals themselves to Madame de Théanges, for her classical and ingenious *étrencne*.

## FAUTEUIL—BERGÈRE—ARM-CHAIR— EPISCOPAL SEAT.

“Inutile a chi non reposa.”

*Book of Emblems—Device, a Chair.*

LAST night we were playing a *charade en action*. As Madame Catalani, and her clever son, with some other foreigners, were of the party, we played it in French. I personated an antiquated ultra *baronne*, restored to her *donjon* in Normandy, and receiving a visit from an old *châtelain* of the neighbourhood, who came to congratulate her on the

restoration of all old things. The scene we made of giving *les honneurs du fauteuil* to my neighbour, my horror at the indignity of offering a *chaise de paille* to an *ancien noble* of seven quarters ; and the overthrow of the whole party, chairs and all, in the struggle of ceremony, occasioned a good deal of laughing. I borrowed the trait from a scene I had witnessed in the Faubourg, on my first arrival in Paris, when a great effort was making to restore the *fauteuil* to its ancient honours.

The history of arm-chairs would make an amusing volume, if given from antique times to the present, from the *fauteuil* of the middle ages, when it had reached its highest political importance, down to the modern *dormeuse*, in which, at this moment, I am scribbling, *ex cathedra* ! What a specimen of the progress of society it would embrace—what state secrets it would reveal—what sanguinary wars—what treaties of peace, what family ties dissolved—what courses of true love turned aside—all owing to the important *fauteuil* !

“ Armed-chairs—chairs with a back—the stool

of honour—the right hand and the left,” says Voltaire, “have, for many ages, been the important objects of diplomacy, and the subjects of illustrious quarrels.” Buonaparte, whose weakness it was to adopt the worn-out *étiquettes* of an order of things directly opposed to his own existence, raised the *fauteuil* along with the altar and the throne ; and it is said, that, when Madame Letitia Buonaparte made her visit of ceremony, on the *accouchement* of her imperial daughter-in-law, the arm-chair was removed from the room, lest she (being, as she was, *roturière*, though the mother of an emperor, four kings, and two or three princesses) might presume to usurp its honours in the presence of the daughter of the Cæsars, the descendant of the Hapsbourgs !

Alas, for the vicissitudes of human grandeur ! There are those living, more *roturière* than the excellent Madame Buonaparte, who have since seated themselves on whatever chair they pleased, in the presence of the ex-Empress of France, the now obscure Duchess of Parma ; who herself sat, confounded with other ladies, in the *salon* of an English peeress, obtaining no distinc-

tion, save what was conferred by the attention and courtesy of an English ambassadress. Oh ! if the great would, or could, but feel how little they owe of the world's homage to themselves, and how much to their position,—before some dreadful reverses teach them the sad truth, that they are but the signs of that power, which lies in principles, and not in persons.

The curule chair of the Romans had a certain respect attached to it, as being the seat of magistracy—very different, however, from the awe which is inspired by the sight of a throne in the hearts of the loyal idolaters of modern absolutism. The luxurious Romans, who, when not in activity, lay extended, even at their meals, on couches, seem not to have considered a mere seat in connexion with rank and power. The Fabiuses and Catos borrowed no distinction from the privilege of sitting in an arm chair. The form of the curule chair is preserved in the sculptured marble of some of the noble statues of antiquity, which are designed in the seated attitude. The ease of their position seems rather to result from the grace of the individuals represented, than from the commodity of the chair,

which is low-backed and simple in form. Its substance, however, was ivory, richly carved—a curious fact in the history of the arts.

It was with the barbarous lower ages that the arm-chair first acquired its modern consequence, and it continued to increase in political importance down to the French revolution. The code of etiquettes concerning the *fauteuil* in old France, was a consecrated volume. To claim *les honneurs du fauteuil*, or to give them, determined the most knotty points of precedence which agitated dynasties, and disturbed the peace of kingdoms. The origin of this distinction lay very probably in the rarity of the object—in the rude unaccommodated and dreary stone towers, in which the ancestors of families of many quarters then sheltered their heads. The easy chair was reserved for the elder or chief of the family, who, in those patriarchal times, ruled with an iron despotism over his timid, but often unnatural offspring; for the son, who was not permitted to sit in the presence of his father, frequently usurped his dominions, and hurried him from his *fauteuil* to his grave. The filial history of the respectful and royal sons of

Spain and Russia, is the epitome of the story of those times, when the *fauteuil* was the domestic throne of every tyrant *châtelain*, and the exclusive privilege of the great.

To know the full consequence attached to sitting in an arm-chair, the French memoirs must be deeply studied; particularly those, written in the simplicity of their hearts, by Dangeau and Mademoiselle Montpensier. The life of the “*grande Mademoiselle*” was one continued agony of quarrels on the subject of the *fauteuil* and the *chaise à dos*; and half the diplomacy of Europe in her time was occupied with discussions on similar subjects. Cardinal Richelieu, having refused to walk three steps beyond the door of his apartment—(he was willing to walk two)—to meet the English ambassador, who came to treat of the marriage of Charles the First with Henrietta of France, that marriage, of such importance to both crowns, was nearly broken off. The cardinal, however, affected sickness, and receiving the English duke in a *chaise longue*, thus avoided the odd step, without breaking off the alliance.

Louis the Thirteenth, desiring to hold a private

council with his minister and master, Richelieu, was obliged to visit him in his bed-room, where he lay dangerously ill. But as a subject, though dying, could not be permitted to receive the king in bed, except the king was lying in bed also, Louis was wheeled in, on a *chaise longue*, and they both thus lay in state to discuss the affairs of the nation. Louis the Fourteenth observed the same form, when he went to visit the wounded hero Turenne.

In the olden times the easy chair, or *chaise de doléance*, was reserved for invalids, in the houses of the middle ranks of England and Germany ; but the chair of “*le roi Dagobert*,”\* if in existence, would have a chance of being discarded, even by

\* The chair of the good King Dagobert is, perhaps, one of the oldest and most curious articles of furniture of the Christian era. In form, it resembles the curule chair of the Romans. The legs are more ancient, and of better workmanship, than the upper part ; but tradition assigns its fabrication to the holy hands of St. Eloi. It was preserved for centuries in the treasury of the Abbey of St. Denis, and was regilt in the time of the Abbot Suger. In August, 1804, it was transported to Boulogne, for the distribution of the crosses of the Legion of Honour ; and a medal, struck on that occasion, represents the modern Charlemagne, seated in this relic of *le bon Roi Dagobert*. It now takes its place, with other antiquities, in *la Bibliothèque du Roi*, at Paris.

the most zealous *voltigeur*, in favour of a modern *dormeuse*, with its easy fall, cushioned back, and pillows of iron, softer than down,—now at the disposition of every member of the family. In all that respects the comforts and commodity of life, the wisdom of our ancestors was confessedly at fault.

The two most interesting arm-chairs in existence, are the Shakspeare chair, late in the possession of Mrs. Garrick, and Voltaire's chair, which stood beside the fire-place in the Hôtel de Vilette, Rue Vaugirard, when I last saw it, in 1820. The inauguration chairs of the O'Neals, the O'Donnels, and the O'Briens would form long items of antiquarian research in the chapter of arm-chairs, too long probably for the patience of the general reader.

So much for the social arm-chair,—the *chaise à dos*, and *fauteuil* of the court—the *bergère* and *chaise à bras* of the château. But the history of the chair of the church—the episcopal chair—with all its sedentary rites, connected with the divine offices and high privileges of its incumbent, is of more importance. The *where*, and the *how*,

the princes of the church should sit enthroned above their prostrate flock, became an object of ecclesiastical attention in the early ages of christianity ; and scarcely had the primitive christians issued from the caves and obscure places whence so many divine things were given "out, than councils were held, and canons established the sites, and positions, and materials of the easy seats of the bishops and clergy. Then came the *absis*, and the *faldistorium*, or chair of state, used for pontifical duties ; and then the episcopal thrones and patriarchal and papal chairs of Rome, all symbols of worldly power and spiritual pride, alike the objects of ambition and contest, and claimed, and struggled, and fought for, like the poor mondaine *fauteuil*, by prince bishops, who, in the early ages, were proud of a *wooden seat*, but who in process of time occupied chairs elevated and gorgeous as regal thrones.

The ruins of the old episcopal throne in the famous cathedral of Rouen, which has flourished from the fourth century, are now forsaken for a magnificent and luxurious chair, or *faldistorium*. The history of the origin and pro-

gress of the bishop's seat, as fixed in his church or cathedral, from the first Bishop of Canterbury, who humbly took his *sedes lignea*, to the last whom divine grace has called to fill its sumptuous throne,\* would in itself throw a strong light upon the history of the church of England. “*Que de choses dans un menuet!*” exclaimed a French dancing-master in an ecstacy at the mysteries he was teaching a royal pupil. *Que de choses dans un fauteuil!* One may write upon a fiddle-stick, doggedly, if not learnedly. One of the best things Swift ever did write, was on a broom-stick.

\* See Somner's History of Canterbury, Appendix, Scriptura, xvij.

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## THE SPIRIT OF THE AGE.

THE tendency in human affairs to proceed by impulses, is a curious fact in the history of the species. At certain indefinite epochs, and often without any very manifest cause, mankind are seized with some sudden passion, and are hurried with an almost universal fervor towards some particular object, which takes possession of the general imagination. The enthusiasm thus kindled, pervades all ranks, and masters all dispositions, giving a common tone and character to whole generations—until, exhausted by its own efforts, it gradually subsides, and gives place to other and newer caprices. This it is which constitutes the spirit of the age—an important matter of consideration for the young adventurer, at his outset in life. The passion for monkery, for crusading, for reformation in religion, for philosophy, for political economy, &c. &c., are cases in point, sufficiently notorious ; not to dwell upon the many minor movements of nations—such

as the South Sea bubble, the tulip mania, mesmerism, craniology, &c., each of which, in its day, has turned the heads of the community, and formed, as it were, an episode in the history of man.

Notwithstanding some occasional absurdities into which this sympathetic susceptibility of our nature may have hurried particular societies, it is the great mainspring of improvement—the countervailing power to authority and precedent. Without such sudden *engouemens*, the world would not be driven from the beaten track ; and the public intellect would lapse for ever into a state of stagnation, like that which has reigned among the Turks since the subsidence of their military and religious enthusiasm. As the impulse of a ship gives its power to the rudder, so the spirit of the age gives efficacy to genius. Scarcely an individual can be quoted as eminent, who did not flourish in an age of considerable excitement; for when the great mass of mankind are at rest, talent, clogged by the general sluggishness, in vain exerts its powers. Its excessive activity is a *charge*—its labours are not understood; and if not per-

secuted, are received with a chilling and paralyzing indifference. Between the accession of the House of Hanover and the American war, there was a manifest stagnation of the public mind in England ; and the minor stars of Dodsley's galaxy shone forth, uneclipsed by the splendour of any first-rate luminary. During the struggles of the French revolution, on the contrary, a succession of geniuses of the highest order, in every department of literature, science, the arts, military and political affairs, &c. &c., added new honours to the British name, and hurried forward civilization with astonishing rapidity.

Those who have had the misfortune to be tied down to the uncongenial society of a *coterie*, to whose feelings and interests they were strangers, may have some notion of what it is to run counter to the spirit of the age, and to set up one's own systems against the mania of the public. Much as a man may be convinced of the truth of his own opinions, and satisfied as he may be of the error of the world's opposition, still it were well to be convinced of his own self-denial and forbearance, before he embarks in an open warfare with re-

ceived notions. To act with sufficient ability to attract notice, is to become at once the marked victim of antiquated error and interested prejudice; and to maintain such a position requires irreproachable character, and a firmness that is not to be shaken by disappointment, nor turned aside by sarcasm or reproach. They, on the contrary, who have the good luck to stumble on a coincidence of feeling and opinion with the society in which they are merged, will find that the cards play themselves; and, without any extraordinary exertion of industry, talent, or virtue, they will easily win the whole game.

It is not very long since the class of reformers embraced but a few individuals; and many must recollect the unmeasured obloquy incurred by certain individuals for the promulgation of truths, which were so unpalatable when first broached, but which soon became familiar, and then ceased to bestow notoriety, or to draw down persecution. Even in these times of free discussion, it is both easier and pleasanter to promote the cause of liberty under the shelter of whiggism, than to make an open avowal of the whole extent of the principle

of reform, at which so many still start in apprehension of danger to their own personal interests.

The opinions of the world are usually a mixture of small portions of truth, with an overwhelming mass of error. From amongst an infinite variety of shades, is formed a sort of average doctrine, which constitutes the opinion of the greatest number. Around this centre are accumulated the various extremes which represent the prejudices and interests of the smaller corps and categories in society. To belong to any of these corps ensures toleration, in proportion to their numbers and respectability; and the same truth may be advanced, with different success, accordingly as it is promulgated under the sanction of a powerful, or an inefficient name. The Unitarians are permitted openly to impugn the divinity of our Saviour; and the Quakers are allowed to reject all interference of priests; while those, who are vulgarly and quaintly called Free-thinkers, are punished for an idle jest against the established church. The former, existing in considerable bodies, are enabled to master opinion; while the latter, having few

to sympathise with them, are opposed by all the prejudices and all the passions of society.

It is seldom that opinions are received purely and absolutely by the public; but most frequently they are modified by local and accidental coincidents. There is more toleration, for example, among Englishmen for Mahometanism in India, than for simple dissent at home. So, likewise, the party which would roast a papist alive in Ireland, looks with complacency on the re-establishment of the Pope on the throne of Italy. Whence is it that the same man should be contented that his co-religionist should be reviled and persecuted by our "ancient ally" at Constantinople, while he resents the slightest deviation from the established creed in England? Merely because one of these facts stands co-ordinated with his habits and his interests, and the other exists in violation of them.

It is not, then, so much the intrinsic opinion to be attacked, which is matter for consideration, as the point of view in which it may be presented, and the manner of effecting its separation from the interests in which it is involved. The attack upon established

error should resemble that game which children play, by casting a bundle of small sticks into a confused heap; and then endeavouring to pick them out, one by one, without disturbing the rest. We should begin by casting about for the detached and isolated points, and next remove those which have the fewest connexions—leaving untouched the pieces in which there are the greatest implications—till at last perhaps they will fall by their own weight.

Much also depends upon times and seasons. When the current of opinion runs strong, an expert swimmer will not directly breast it, but take advantage of back-waters and of sheltering prominences: but when the tide is on the turn, and the force of the stream is nearly spent, he dashes boldly into the middle of the waters, and gains his point by the shortest possible cut.

It is by inattention to this fact, that effect is often mistaken for cause. Preachers and orators lay the French revolution to the charge of Voltaire and the philosophers, who were but the creatures of the revolutionary movement. They would neither have shewn themselves so boldly, nor obtained so much

sympathy, if the spirit of the age had not been preeminently coincident with, and favourable to, their efforts. Had Bacon lived in the twelfth century, and had he, by a miracle, possessed the knowledge which he afterwards displayed, he would have either been brought to the stake, or his books, through the neglect of his cotemporaries, would have been consigned to the dust of libraries, to have awaited a more congenial and spirit-stirring epoch. Wickliff was as bold and as clear-sighted a reformer, as Luther ; but he was more in advance of his age : and his want of success was the penalty of the discrepancy.

In combating error, it is a golden rule to leave unnoticed whatever is indifferent to the point at issue. In converting a Jew, it is unwise to begin by ostentatiously eating pork. Leave the Quaker in the undisturbed possession of his hat, and the Catholic in the quiet enjoyment of his red herring. In the same spirit, it is good to back truth by authority and precedent : for though mere reason is better argument, yet authority, by chining in with the prejudices of the hearer, will in all probability be the more availing. There are thousands

who would reject the doctrine of philosophical necessity, nakedly proposed, who would willingly embrace it, if disguised under the mask of grace and predestination ; simply because a few grave names may be cited in favour of the latter opinion.

The interests and passions of those who may be hostile to a given reformation, are not all involved in an equal degree. There are thousands and tens of thousands who will accept of a principle, up to a certain point, where it begins to operate on themselves. With a few exceptions, all the world is beginning to be reconciled with free trade in every branch of industry,—but their own. It is therefore dangerous to push a principle at once to its utmost extreme. The further it is carried, the more persons are alarmed, and the less is the shame attendant upon brutish opposition. The moderate, moreover, in all disputes, collect around them the half thinkers and half feelers—a powerful faction, embracing those who are too indolent to inquire, or too corrupt to desire a practical improvement to the fullest extent. For such personages a middle term is a convenient retreat ; and by neutralizing their opposition, you gain time

and a clearer stage. This may not always be very candid : but if the “*così al ego*” system be allowable in oratory, it is no less justifiable where the grave interests of the species are at issue. The number of those who see questions in their wholeness, is very small ; the mass are more moved by especial instances and examples.

In knowledge, nothing is isolated ; and the establishment of one truth is the dethronement of many errors. With these, it is best to deal in detail ; and await the gradual development of a growing spirit, before venturing upon points in which the age is not prepared to follow. Every body admits that the Deity is wise and good : but he who should deduce all the necessary consequences of this abstract verity, would expose such a mass of inconsistencies and absurdities, as would bring the whole force of the many to bear against him ; and would ensure for himself the palm of martyrdom, without advancing public opinion one iota. Proceed, therefore, like the snail, with your feelers before you ; and reserve to yourself, by a timely halt, the privilege of never combating with ~~more~~ opponents at once than you feel able to over-

throw. Disgraceful retreats are pregnant with fearful delays : for a *coup manqué* is followed by a revulsion of sentiment which may require the lapse of a generation to recover.

A point of prudence, equally commendable, is to avoid taking in hand too many simultaneous reforms. In this respect Voltaire was wiser than Rousseau, who levelled his attacks at once against the abuses of church and state. By respecting the nobility, while he attacked the clergy, Voltaire even now exercises a beneficial influence on French affairs. The Jesuits have at this moment many opponents among the old noblesse, who have derived their opinions on church government from that writer, simply because he spared the pretensions of their own class. In the field of argument, as in the field of battle, an undue extension of the line is accompanied by a corresponding weakness in all its points.

There is, however, one case in which a contrary method is more availing ; namely, when the public spirit is not carried very powerfully in any certain direction, and when opinion stagnates. In such moments, the more startling and extravagant the

novelty, the more likely it is to produce an impression. Authority and precedent are beaten down and trodden upon by a shock which unsettles all habitual notions: and an enthusiasm is unexpectedly engendered, which commences a new epoch in the history of nations. It was thus that the American revolution found its age; and that the political works of Thomas Paine produced an effect, which a writer of less daring and intensity could never have achieved. Under all circumstances, extreme opinions have the merit of setting the thinking part of the public to work: but when they are scattered *mal à propos*, it is with the certain shipwreck of the propounders; and often with a flux and reflux of sentiment, that eventually consumes more time and means, than are necessary to arrive at the proposed end, by a gentler and more undermining method.

These remarks will explain the partial successes of writers, who have taken in one age and country more than in others. Newton and Locke were admired in England, long before they made their way on the Continent; but latterly Locke has been more popular abroad than at home: because the

spirit of the age, moving in contrary directions, has led the English back towards despotism in politics and mysticism in religion ; whereas, abroad, it flowed in a full tide towards reason and liberality. It is now fashionable to question Locke's fundamental principle, not because an innate idea can be brought in evidence against him, but on account of certain supposed consequences to which his principle is said to lead—and this happens in the nineteenth century ! So, likewise, Beccaria, Filangieri, and other writers of the same cast, have never attained the same popularity in England, as with their own countrymen ; while Bentham, who at home is an object of sarcasm and suspicion, is admired on the Continent as the very prophet of legislation. A change in the spirit of the age is at this moment (1821) working a corresponding alteration in the reputation of the writers of the French Augustan epoch ; who are losing much of their former popularity, or rather idolatry, among their countrymen ; and are giving place to authors, whose ideas and manners are more consonant to the existing state of public feeling and opinion.

Knaves and hypocrites are perfectly aware of

these truths ; unless, indeed, it is the blind instinct of cupidity, which leads them so directly to their corrupt ends. But reformers in general, either are ignorant of them, or disregard them. The enthusiasm which leads forward the advanced guard of opinion, but rarely allows an observance of what is merely prudential ; and the high-minded votarist of truth, shrinks from whatever assumes the aspect of compromise, as from a degradation. The first promulgators of useful innovations are therefore usually the victims of their zeal. They gain the honour of the day with posterity ; but in the mean time they are cast down, and form with their bodies the bridge over which the more calculating spirits of a future day pass in triumph to their end. Thus Romilly spent a life of disappointment and vexation, that Mr. Peel might reap the fruits of his labours ; and thus the Archbishop of Canterbury enjoys a splendid income, for preaching the doctrines which brought Latimer and Ridley to the stake.

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## THE KEY OF THE BOOK CASE.

“*Casa mia, casa mia,  
 Piccolina che sia,  
 Tu sei sempre casa mia.*”\*

WHERE did the Italians get these homely lines? they who have no “*casa piccolina*,” and whose home is an opera box. Now I have just such a *casa* as this domestic maxim implies; and I love it beyond measure. Though often glad to leave it behind me, I always return to it with satisfaction. I never knew any, but the foolish and the worthless of my own sex, who did not feel a real pleasure in the performance of domestic duties; and though one may be sometimes inclined to leave behind, “*tous ses maris et tous ses enfans*,” as Madame de Coulanges has it, still a true woman always comes back with pride and delight to the fuss, and rummage, and self-importance of domestic legislation.

\* “ My home, my home, though small it be,  
 Yet still that home is dear to me.”

The great must know less of this, than those whose fortunes are at odds with their tastes and position; and the blue stockings, of all ranks, affect to have souls above saucepans. But we of the trade, who have taken our places as candidates for the emoluments and honours of authorship, are not forced upon such affectation.

“ One of the advantages of being a wit,” says Swift, “ is the license it gives to play the fool ;” and one of the privileges of a female writer who has no longer a name to make, is, that she may make her own—pudding, if she likes it. For myself, I am a heaven-born cook : but of this, more hereafter. Still, what I miss most, when I leave my own house, is not my *batterie de cuisine*, but my library. Not that it is as large as the Alexandrian, nor as curious as the Vatican ; but that it is just that sort of library in which, as Madame de Sévigné says, “ you cannot lay your hand on a volume without a desire to read it through.”

*Madonna mia !* how well I know the smell of a country-house library ! Being, by divine indignation, an author, people think I do nothing but read and write books, “ eat paper, and drink ink,” as Sir Na-

thaniel says ; and are pleased to consider that which is but the episode, as the history of my life. It frequently happens that, before I have made acquaintance with half the rose trees, smelted the geraniums, or swallowed a draught of the delicious air I left town expressly to breathe, I am presented with the key of the book-case—[I would as soon lock up my bells as my books, since the great merit of both is to be always at hand]—So I go twisting and turning the said key into its rusty lock ; and, *ouf !* the fust and the must, when the book-case is opened ! Then, what a search for something one can read through in less than a twelvemonth. Out of every hundred volumes, there are scarcely more than six or seven works ; for country-house libraries are made up of folios, quartos, or large octavos, *pour le moins* ; except that here and there is a sort of thick, short, squat volume, that belongs to no class of form ; and every work runs from ten to fifteen volumes. The reason is, that country-house libraries are generally heir-looms, originally collected as a mark of gentility by the wisdom of the country-house ancestors. They consist of what are called standard

books—books that would let the world stand still to the end of time!—composed and collected when knowledge, instead of being given, as now, in quintessential drops, was weighed out by the stone, or measured by the yard. Concentration, in all things—the throwing off the rubbish, and getting at the element—is the true proof of excellence; and it is now, in literature, as in medicine; instead of being choked with a pint of bark mud, (all port wine as it may be,) we swallow a few pellucid drops of *quinine*, without wry faces or deep inspirations! It formerly took a life to write a book, and half a one to read it. Oh, the “*Rollin’s Histories*,” and “*Voyages round the World*,” and the “*Clelias and Cassandras*,” and the poems in fifty-nine cantos—the folio “*Thoughts upon Nothing*,” and the seven-volume ponderosity of “*Sir Charles Grandison*!”

Denon—whose own work on Egypt, hit off, as it is, with his own peculiar *fin:esse* and spirit, (*touche fine et spirituelle*,)—is a fair illustration of the genuine style of modern writing—Denon was the most impatient person under the infliction of voluminous works (myself excepted)

that I ever knew. It was a constant theme of abuse and laughter between us. One night I was leaning on his arm, at a *soirée*, at the Prince de Beauveau's, when the excellent and estimable Monsieur S——, in passing close by us, trod on his foot: he turned to me, with an expression of pain, and said, "*Ah! ma chère petite, les dix-huit volumes m'ont tombé sur le pied!*"\* And yet, after all, I, too, have appeared pranked out in two quarto volumes, heavier than myself, and quite as tall: but of this presumptuous magnitude, I stood as guiltless as of the Talmud. Three small, compact, lady-like octavos were ever the utmost boundary of my authorical ambition. For all beyond this, my publishers were more in fault than I.

One exception I must make: I originally wrote my "*Novice of St. Dominick*" in ten goodly, stout volumes, which, with much humility, as I thought, I cut down to seven. With these seven—by far the heaviest part of my luggage—I arrived in London, and presented myself to Sir Richard Phillips,

\* "The whole weight of his eighteen volumes was in his step."

who advised me, to take back my manuscript, like a good girl, and reduce it to five. "Insatiate monster, would not one suffice!" But down went the volumes; and when I took the remaining sibyl leaves to Sir Richard, he again begged they might be reduced to four. This was too much; though I verily believe, at this moment, that the publisher's good-natured consideration of my *amour propre* alone prevented him from stinting my exuberance to two volumes, which, perhaps, he ought to have done. The work, however, succeeded, in spite of its bulk, and still maintains a preference over my lighter and better productions, in the estimation at least of my cotemporaries, the ladies of a certain age, who first read its multitudinous pages, when they were as young as the author who wrote them; and who still mistake their own first, warm impressions for the merits of a work, which, truth to tell, had not too many to boast of.

Extreme youth, like extreme age, is naturally verbose. If the aged speak from the fulness of memory, the young are loquacious from the novelty and strength of their sensations. Youth, likewise,

suspects not its own tritisms and plagiarisms ; nor thinks it is telling what every body knows, and nobody cares for. The secret, the grand secret, that "*l'art d'ennuyer est l'art de tout dire*"\*— that to exhaust a subject is not to illustrate it—is unknown to the young, who know so little, and who feel so much.

When I wrote "The Novice," two volumes often were alike to me. But I must keep the history of my authorship for another time. It would make a cat laugh: alas ! it has often made me cry !

\* The art of being tiresome consists in leaving nothing unsaid.

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## APOTHECARIES.

A PROPOS to *quinine*, that pretty, elegant medicine, that looks like distilled diamonds, or the rill that runs between the ornamented banks of my dear Kilkane. This getting at quintessences is rather injurious to the craft and mystery of compounding. When people cease to take medicine by the pint, adieu to *Messieurs les Apothicaires!* This was confessed, with much *naïveté*, lately, by one of the profession, who left it, to undertake an extensive brewery. Being asked the motive of this change, he said, “The public will now swallow my drugs by the quart, instead of the phial.”

How many professions depend upon the ignorance of the age in which they flourish. In the middle ages, the apothecaries were general shopkeepers, and, in England, for a long time, the exclusive dealers in wine. In Italy, where so many traces of the middle ages still subsist unchanged, the apothecary is called, to this day,

*spezialc*, or spice-dealer. When we resided at Como, we purchased our tea, sugar, wax-lights, oils, and medicines, all at the same shop. Up to the time of James the First, the apothecaries of London were not a distinct body, but belonged to the Grocers' Company. The probability is, that humanity gained little by the change; for a trade, when turned into a mystery, is but better fitted to play upon the innate gullibility of man. The *hocus-pocus* of pouring one bottle into another, lost nothing in the hands of persons, who assumed the right of administering, by gallons, their own compositions.

*Rabclais*, by-the-by, was the son of an apothecary, who was Seigneur de la Devinière. Could this feudal lord of lands have been an apothecary, in the modern sense of the word?—or was he not rather a wholesale general merchant?

The Chinese, in their dull wisdom, have a curious custom in their great towns—a substitute for our dispensaries. A stone, of many cubits high, is erected in some public place, with the names and prices of every medicine inscribed; and when the poor want physic, they apply to the

treasury, and get the price of the drug required. This speaks volumes for the probity of the people. If, in Ireland, the treasury was authorized thus to advance the purchase-money of medicines to the poor, instead of their applying to the Medical-Hall, I fear their steps would more probably wander to the whisky-shop. This public pricing of drugs bespeaks also great and general ignorance among the people, who are not considered capable of purchasing the outlandish commodity. How different from the modern American, who buys not only his physic, but his theology, where and how he pleases !

In our own times, there has been a vast revolution in apothecaries. As to the mere outward man, what a difference between the formal proprietor of a Dalmahoy-wig, and a snuff-coloured or crimson suit of dittoes, an amber-headed cane, and scarlet *roquelaure*, (who phlebotomized our fathers, with the solemn air of his own Galen's-head,) and the spruce, dapper incumbent of a cabriolet, who now bounds up to your knocker with a hop-step-and-a-jump ! But the “march of intellect” has done much more still for the interior. Every pro-

fessional man must, in these days, know something of his business ; and the apothecary, whose mental stock in trade is not as much improved as his *matériel*, will have poor chance of employment.—The dealers in physic first began as conjurors ; then figured as priests ; next sunk into retailers of hard words ; and finally have become almost as reasonable and intelligible mortals, as the patients to whom they administer. What will this jacobinical age come to next ?

## MAXIMS—PORTRAITS.

NOBODY writes maxims now. Maxims do not belong to the state of intellect and literature of the present age. In times when knowledge was the exclusive property of a particular class, and when mankind leaned upon the opinions of the learned, they were more apt to refer their conduct to a well established rule, than to govern it by their own reflections. These were the times for “ wise saws and modern instances.” Men now think for themselves, and do not require recipes for

thinking. It is remarkable, that the most celebrated maxim-mongers of modern times were men of quality; and that their aphorisms are chiefly applicable to the exigencies, vices, and virtues of a court, of which the flower of maxim-mongers has said, “It does not render us happy, while it prevents the search of happiness in other directions.”

Towards the middle of the reign of Louis the Fourteenth, maxims became a rage in France. Their terseness, point, and epigrammatic turn, particularly adapted them to *l'esprit du siècle*, and to a language made up of phrases—All the coteries of the Hôtels La Rochefoucauld, Carnavalet, D'Albret, &c. &c., including all the genuine wit and taste of the day, as opposed to the Hôtel Rambouillet and other “*burcaux d'esprit*,” dealt largely in maxims. The Duc de Rochefoucauld published his, and distanced all competitors. The philosophy of more enlightened times owed much to this breviary of practical and worldly experience. Helvetius borrowed from it his leading doctrine; and Hume, without acknowledging the obligation, stood deeply indebted to its dogmas for his opinions.

What a sensation the “Maxims” must have made at Versailles, when they first came out, and

“ Each cried, ‘ that is levelled at me.’ ”

Mesdames de La Fayette, Sévigné, Coulange, Cornuel, and others of the female wits who surrounded the gouty chair of the once brilliant cavalier of the beautiful De Longueville, saw the work in MS. long before it was published, and probably helped the illustrious author to some of the poignant maxims, to which female *fincesse* seems to have lent its delicacy and its bitterness. It was from this very MS. that a splendid edition of the work was published, some years back, by the Rochefoucauld family, and edited by Mons. Suard, the late perpetual Secretary of the Academy ; who assured me, not only that the work was printed from this precious morsel of autography, but that he was further assisted in his editorial capacity by a copy of the first printed edition, which was marked all over with the duke’s own corrections, erasures, and marginal notes.

One morning, in Paris, (1818) as I sat reading a letter of Madame de Sévigné, dated from the Hôtel

de la Rochefoucauld, the Count G— de la R— was announced. I was so deep in the *coterie* of Le Faubourg, that I started, and expected to find the coadjutor along with him. “I have brought you,” said my noble visitor, “a little *étrenne* ;” and he presented me with the works of his illustrious ancestor — *Me voilà donc* a link in the chain with times and persons who so early got possession of my mind and imagination, through the accidents of my miscellaneous and unguided studies. There is a magic in an historical name, that no democracy of opinion or principle can resist, except in the dull and unlettered ; and it is to the glory of some of the greatest families of France, that they were illustrated by some highly-gifted and highly-spirited member, who enhanced the advantages of descent and birth, and redeemed their class from the popular odium which the vices and meanness of its majority incurred.

Before the fashion of maxim-making went out, the fashion of portrait-making came in : every body wrote every body’s portrait. Two of the best portraits extant are those of Cardinal de Retz, by his old enemy and late friend, the Duc de la

Rochefoucauld, and that of Madame de Sévigné, by Madame de la Fayette. “*La grande princesse*,” Mademoiselle de Montpensier, in her coarse, vulgar, but natural way, has given a number of cotemporary portraits, through her amusing memoirs. All her sketches of Charles II., in his youthful days, when he was paying his addresses to her, are admirable; though very unlike the frank, generous, and devoted cavalier who figures as the royal hero in one of Sir W. Scott’s novels. His utter ignorance of his own affairs—his passion for dogs and horses, and his spending all his time in learning to dance the *triolet*\*—which, with his declining a dish of ortolans, and throwing himself on a piece of beef and a shoulder of mutton,† finally decided her to refuse him—are admirable touches both of character and manner, and make

\* “Je vous vois ici avec douleur dansant le triolet, et vous divertir lorsque vous devriez être en lieu, où vous vous fissiez casser la tête, ou vous remettre la couronne sur la tête.”

† “Je conçus de lui une fort mauvaise opinion d’être roi à son âge, et n’avoir aucune connaissance des affaires: ce n’est pas que je n’eusse par là dû reconnaître mon sang. Les Bourbons sont gens fort appliqués aux bagatelles, et peu solides. Il ne mangea point d’ortolons, il se jeta sur une pièce de bœuf, et sur une épaule de mouton, comme s’il n’y eut que cela.”

up a more faithful portrait of the worthless, profligate, and “mutton-eating king,” than any on record. The reason is, that it was drawn from the life, without any reference to party or posterity.

In the reign of the Regent Orleans, a work, called *Galerie des Peintres*, collected all the “portraits” of the time, without any mercy to the originals, and consequently had a considerable vogue. One of the prettiest and best-natured works of this description I know, is still, I believe, in MS. It is by the celebrated Madame Albrizzi, of Venice, whose acquaintance I had the pleasure of making at Padua, and who speaks in pictures, and may well write them—a charming and rare art! The Albrizzi Gallery is enriched with the most eminent characters of the last half century. Her friend, and once devoted admirer, Denon, has found a conspicuous place in it, *bien encadré*. He, in return, has engraved a picture of Madame Albrizzi, extremely like, and worthy of its fair model. He sent me a copy, a few weeks before his death, with one of his own.

Lady C. L—— was accused of painting the portrait of Lord Byron in Glenarvon, though not

*en beau.* One day, at a dinner party at Copet, Madame de Staël, addressing Lord Byron across the table, asked, in her *sans façon* way, “ Is it true, my lord, that you are the original of Glenarvon ?” “ It may be so,” he replied, “ but I never sat for it.”

Every body, who writes novels, now labours under the imputation of putting forth their friends and enemies “ in their books.” No “ kindred or propinquity” excludes the suspicion. No one is thus accused more than I am ; and no one is more innocent of the charge. Except in the instances of a few public characters, which are fair game, all my sketches have been of the species or genus, and never of the individual. Still I think I could draw a character from the life, if I should set about it. *Voyons*—“ My dear friend Mrs. \* \* \* is one of those who—” But no ; I’ll keep my dear friend as sportsmen keep bag foxes ; to let her loose on a future and more favourable occasion for shewing sport.

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## HUMAN ANIMALITY.

"His intellect is not replenished—he is only an animal, only sensible in the duller parts."

SHAKSPEARE.

THE chances of my visiting list brought to my boudoir this morning two such pretty creatures, male and female, so brilliant and so bird-like, that I thought they had escaped from a group of tropical specimens that stood in a corner of the room, and which they very much resembled. There was the bill, and the beak, and the bright plumage, and elegant form ; and not one sound of melody in their discordant voices—not one idea in their vacant heads : and so they chirped, and chattered, without ceasing, with all the emulative noise and volubility of bores and birds. They had neither of them met before ; and, mutually excited and mutually pleased, they so ruffled and fluttered their feathers at each other, that I really longed to catch both, to shut them up together in the same cage, and add

them to my collection of curiosities, natural, and un-natural.

These two creatures can never have any conduct, for they are evidently and organically deficient in their judgment; those bird-shaped heads, with their disproportioned beaks, and falling-in of the lower part of the facial structure, always produce self willed folly—the obstinacy which arises from the inability to receive an impression. One of my pretty visitors has recently and strongly evinced this species of imperturbability. Persons who resemble brute animals, are generally deficient in intellect. Men who have the low shallow forehead of the bull-dog will prefer Mendoza to Coke upon Littleton; and send them as you may to the bar or to the pulpit, they will live and die prize-fighters—if not in the ring at Hockley, at least in the circle of their friends and acquaintance, to whom their pugnacity will be a perpetual annoyance.

Men who resemble monkeys (and I know several who do), who have small close meeting eyes, are generally rogues, or at least extremely cunning; but it is the cunning which is

without wisdom—precisely the species of intelligence ascribed to the amusing animal they resemble. Men, who resemble horses, may succeed by force of volition in particular careers, where will is more requisite, than development of intellect ; but the horse-faced gentleman could never truly answer in the affirmative to poor Maturin's habitual question, on a first introduction—" *Are you intellectual?*"

I believe it is an allowed fact in physics, that the extreme facial development, which goes to the physiognomy of our horse-faced friends, is always at the expense of the brain ; for the horse is a most stupid animal, thorough-breed him as you may. Conside in your dog, your cat, your mule, your ass, (a most misrepresented animal, by the by,) but beware of your horse ! Train, break, educate, and harness him, he is never to be trusted. If I had the task allotted me of selecting those to whom the destiny of a nation was to be committed, I should never choose men who bore an obvious resemblance to any of the race of brute animals : they must be morally defective somehow or other. The head of a bird is not

only a moral defect, but a positive animal deformity. A horse's head is not a deformity, but it is evidently a very inferior organization. Before the representatives of the people are chosen by the people, who themselves have been likened, by a great statesman and philosopher, to pigs, and called a swinish multitude, I would have them examined by the suffrages of a committee of eminent physiologists, anatomists, physicians, and surgeons.

Well, all this may be nonsense; but it is *my sense*: *tale, quale*, I give it as I have it. "A homely thing, Sir, but a thing of my own," as 'Touchstone says; and so, there it is!

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## MY REVIEWERS.

"Tout ce qui s'attache à la peau des malheureux gens de lettres."

FIGARO.

THERE is nothing so droll as the way in which reviews are sometimes got up—the manner in which "the charge is prepared," and sentence of death pronounced, by the awful "we's," against poor authors, like myself, who have had their little success, not only without the "metaphysical aid" of reviewers, but in absolute defiance of their fulminations.

The review of "Salvator Rosa" was perpetrated after this fashion. The great well-known of a great review, in distributing work to the little unknowns who write under him, transmitted a copy of mine to be cut up by a certain cockney liberal, the Lycurgus of Bow-bells, and the Solon of the Poultry. The book, thus marked for cutting by the top-sawyer, fell into the hands of one who mentioned it to the author. *Pardi!* it was "cut and

come again!"—all scored, underlined, and marginally-noted with square and rule canons of criticism—as a guide to the London journeyman, who knew as much of "Salvator" and the arts, as he did of the interior of Devonshire-house or the Vatican. But no matter : "*puis donc qu'il suffisoit en ce tems-là d'avoir la figure d'homme pour se mêler de critiquer*"—he applied himself to the job, and a long, inflated, bitter article was done, as per order, full of mis-statements and misrepresentations ; when "one sad doubt arose," of a much less conclusive tendency than that of Parnell's "Hermit," but on a point of more immediate personal interest. The reviewer, *à commandement*, was not only a journeyman sawyer of the great Edinburgh pit, but he was also on Mr. Colburn's list of "my authors ;" and as the authoress of "Salvator" was the queen-bee of that gentleman's authorical hive, there was no knowing how the matter might be taken, or how far it might offend Mr. Colburn to attack his queen-bee, and stop the sale of a work upon which he had expended a considerable price. To set his mind at ease, then, the *exécuteur des hautes œuvres* of the literary

justiciary of Edinburgh took his review to New Burlington-street, for inspection : but, just as he was in the act of shewing his MS., the subject of its vituperations was announced ; who, having *les petites entrées* of the publisher's study, followed the servant sufficiently closely, to catch a glimpse of the long leg and *ci-devant* white stocking of the reviewer, in his escape by another door.

“ Who have I frightened away ? ” asked “ the lively little lady,” as the Quarterly calls her, when it does not call her an “ odious worm ! ”

“ Only the reviewer of ‘ Salvator Rosa ’ in the forthcoming Edinburgh,” replied the bibliopolist.

“ And what does he say ? ”

“ Why, it is, on the whole, rather bitter—it is indeed ! ”

“ May I look at it ? for there it lies, I know, upon instinct.”

“ I think you had better not. Besides, it is a point of honour—indeed it is out of the question.”

“ Oh ! honour among thieves ! Will you let him publish it ? for I take it for granted he is one of your Johnny Raws.”

“ Why, indeed—that is, I do not think it can do any harm. The attack on ‘ France’ sold two editions, you know.”

“ Oh ! if it is to serve *your* sale, *laissez faire !*”

“ The book has already done its business ; but if your ladyship object—”

“ I ! Oh dear, no ; let the man earn his money. By the by, who is he ?”

“ Who is he ? Oh, I cannot—that is—upon my honour, I cannot tell you. Clever man, though—a popular author—he is indeed !”

“ You won’t tell me his name ?”

“ I cannot, indeed—it is quite out of the question, Lady M——.”

“ Well, I’ll tell you !”

*Le fermier de mon talent* opened his eyes !

“ Indeed, Lady M——, you cannot even guess who it is. Besides, you really—that is, I should not tell you, if you did.”

“ It is Mr. \* \* \* !” and I announced the name of my Zoilus.

“ Dear me !—well, now, really, you are so odd ; but you are mistaken—you are, indeed !”

I was not mistaken ; nor do I know any just cause

or impediment why I should not denounce my critical executioner, who has shewn me so little mercy, so little justice! There is something so revolting in hired misrepresentation—something so mutually degrading, in a task thus given, and thus performed—it belongs so peculiarly to the *canaille* of literature, who stab for pay, like bolder (and honester) assassins, that the soul sickens when talent, and supposed liberality, desert the standard of independent opinion, to enlist in the *bande noire* of organized vituperators, or enrol in the troop of well paid puffers and party panegyrists! It is, therefore, perhaps, for the interests of literature and morality that an exposure of such literary *girouettism* should be made; and yet I cannot seriously denounce even a public enemy. Though I may have “stirred up with a long pole”\* the deathless vengeance of the Literary Gazette, or have *rompu la paille* with the higher powers of the Quarterly, in return for the seven deadly sins, for which they have excommunicated me in their Index Expurgatorius, still I have always rather fenced

\* See letter to the Reviewers of Italy, prefixed to the third edition of that work.

with my foes in fun, than sparred with them in spite—I have never been the first to announce, nor denounce, the names of the calumniators who have endeavoured to blacken and to slander mine; and even now, leaving my Bow-bell Reviewer to public detection, as I have done others of my critical assailants, whom I have trotted out for public amusement (nor failed in the intention,) I thus give my wrongs to the wind, and his name, in a whisper, to the safe ears of our mutual publisher. For his article on Salvator, I leave it untouched and unanswered, to mark an epoch of *décadence* in that great periodical, which, in the better energy of its pristine vigour, was wont to consecrate its severity by the general justice of its attacks, and the brilliant talent with which they were executed.

And now, instead of gratifying my revenge, I will do what is so much more gracious, and so much more consonant to my sex, character, and country—I will gratify my vanity, by recording the opinion of one on the subject of Salvator Rosa, in every way qualified to judge of all in which the arts are concerned; of one who has, in his own

exquisite works, left proofs of a finer tact in literature, than all the critical acumen from Aristotle to the Aristarchus of Modern Athens included—I mean the author of *Egypt*, the *Directeur du Musée Français*, the Baron Denon. I have the less scruple in recording the opinions of this illustrious writer and artist, on the subject of my *Life of Salvator*, because it is the very reverse of indiscriminate approbation.

Salvator Rosa, considered as the rival of Poussin, ("the god" of Denon's idolatry,) was not viewed with any favourable prepossession by the proud compatriot of "the Poet of Painters:" for Denon, though long standing at the head of the cognoscenti of Europe, and revered as their Coryphaeus, had the heroic weakness of nationality, the foible of the patriotic; and the comparative merits of the two great contemporaries of THE PINCIO were too often brought in contrast by the *Romanticists* of the day; not to embitter a little the feelings of the elegant classicist, whose love of the arts, as they existed in the antique world, was confirmed among the ruins of Rome, and in the gallery of the capitol, where,

both as a minister and an exile, the deepest of his impressions were taken, and the happiest of his days passed.

*Au reste* — to account for the rather odd appellations of “*Drôle de corps*,” and “*Vol au vent*,” used in these letters, they were mutually given and accepted in the gaiety and intimacy of a friendship, by which I was so much and so long distinguished — the mutual *sobriquets* passed into our correspondence, which continued till within a few weeks of his death. It is from that correspondence, that I now, for the benefit of the arts, and the gratification of their lovers, as much as in my own defence against an unjust, misrepresenting, and hired criticism, select and transcribe two letters\* on the subject of my publication of the “*Life and Times of Salvator Rosa*.”

\* Although this first letter does not more than allude to the immediate subject before me, the public, I think, will not be sorry to possess, in its integrity, so good a specimen of the grace and playfulness of Mons. Denon's turn of mind, which, in one of his advanced age, is peculiar to the climate and temperament of France.

“ *To Lady Morgan, Dublin.*

“ MON CHER DRÔLE DE CORPS,

“ JE viens d'apprendre que la traduction de Salvator Rosa paroissoit depuis quelques jours. Le premier qui m'en a parlé, est Monsieur de Ségur,\* qui m'a dit, qu'il l'avoit dévoré ; que non seulement c'étoit un ouvrage charmant, mais qu'il étoit d'un mérit très-distingué. D'autres m'en ont parlé avec enthousiasme. Ces rapports m'ont fait sentir combien je vous aime ; car j'étois tenté de remercier ces messieurs du plaisir qu'ils avoient eu. J'ai vite envoyé chercher l'ouvrage ; et je vais tâcher de lire avec reflexion, avant de vous en parler.

“ J'espèrè que vous allez de suite vous mettre à écrire le roman de Drôle de corps et de Vol au vent. N'attendez pas pour le dénouement, que vous mourriez de douleur de la perte que vous viendrez

\* The celebrated Comte de Ségur, the ambassador to Catherine of Russia, and one of the most distinguished authors which modern France has produced. His own memoirs, lately published, have added a brilliant gem to the bright galaxy of French autobiography.

à faire de moi. Je crois qu'il vaut mieux que je vous enlève, que le chevalier furieux cherche nos traces, pour nous poignarder, et se tuer après, et que nous nous perdions tous trois dans le désert de Zara. En attendant, je vous envoie mon portrait, qu'il faut tâcher de dérober à la jalouse fureur du Chevalier, qui aura, sans doute, anéanti une autre épreuve, que je vous avois envoyé, et dont vous ne me parlez pas. Dites-lui, cependant quelques tendresses ; car malgré les horreurs qu'il doit faire dans le roman, je me sens pour lui un sentiment que je ne saurois définir.

“ Notre pauvre Mad. — est véritablement malade depuis six mois, et cependant n'est pas changée. Elle veut vous écrire : mais si je voulois l'attendre, peut-être ma lettre ne vous arriveroit-elle jamais.

“ Monsieur E. vous remettra une notice que je viens de faire, dont il n'y a que cinquante épreuves, pour lui donner de la préciosité. Un petit portrait improvisé par le meilleur lithographe, auquel j'ai ajouté celui du dit lithographe nommé Mauresse, et ma portière,—celle qui vous introduisoit, à qui j'avois défendu de dormir, pendant

que vous étiez ici, et qui se repose après votre départ.

“ Vous ne savez peut-être pas, cher Drôle de corps, que votre Vol au vent a eu l'honneur d'être admis comme membre de votre académie de Dublin. Je joins ici une lettre de remercemens à l'académie, que je vous prie de remettre à Mr. le Président ; je vous prie aussi de renouveler à Monsieur Davis (qui a bien voulu me donner la première nouvelle de mon admission) toutes mes actions de grace. Je lui ai déjà écrit ; mais il est fort possible qu'il n'ait pas reçu ma lettre, attendu que tout ce que j'écris en Angleterre et en Irlande est régulièrement retenu ;—sans doutc, pour le faire imprimer, lorsqu'il y en aura assez pour former un volume.

“ Je vous dirai que votre portrait m'a fait grand plaisir, quoique le nez soit trop gros. Mais il est gravé avec finesse et délicatesse ; et l'aspect général m'est agréable.

“ Je suis bien de votre avis relativement à nos compatriotes. Cependant il y en a peut-être encore jusqu'à quatre qu'il faut distinguer de la tourbe regnante.

“ Adieu, cher Drôle de corps ; je vous aime bien, et suis bien aise de vous aimer.

“ Votre Vol au vent,

“ *Le 19 Mars, 1824.*”

“ DEMON.”

“ Voici un petit portrait de Salvator Rosa, qu'autrefois j'ai gravé à la hâte; je vous en envoyerai un autre, sur une boîte, par la première occasion.”

“ *To Lady Morgan, Dublin.*

“ CHER DRÔLE DE CORPS,

“ JE lis avec un plaisir extrême votre Salvator Rosa. L'introduction est une superbe chosc. Ensuite il faut que vous me permettrez de vous observer, que vous prenez trop parti dans la guerre des artistes. S. Rosa avoit bec et ongles pour se défendre, et il en usoit même la plus part du temps offensivement; c'étoit un habile homme, mais fort mauvais coucheur. On pouvoit l'admirer, se plaire avec lui ; mais il devoit être très-difficile de l'aimer. Vous le peignez comme libéral, et vous le laissez voir plus que glorieux, farouche, fastueux,

hautain, despote s'il avoit pu : furieux pendant toute sa vie d'être regardé comme un peintre de genre, tandis qu'il n'auroit été que cela, si dans les dernières années de sa vie, il ne se fut avisé de faire quatre ou cinq tableaux d'histoire. Après cela, mon cher Drôle de corps, vous l'avez trop loué comme graveur. Dans ces planches il a écrit ses compositions, la fougue de ses pensées ; mais sa pointe est lâche et vagabonde : et dans ce genre, il a été ni dessinateur ni coloriste. Enfin je vais peut-être vous faire sauter en l'air, quand je vous dirai que la moindre graveur de Rembrant est préférable à la plus belle de Salvator Rosa. Du reste, cher Drôle de corps, vous avez atteint le but principal de votre ouvrage, qui est de faire connoître le siècle, que vous avez peint jusqu'à l'illusion, tellement qu'en le lisant je me croyois de la société de tous ces gens-là.

“Quand vous ferez une seconde édition, souvenez-vous, chère amie, de mieux traiter le portrait du Poussin, qui étoit aussi modeste qu'il étoit grand. A la vérité, il ne savoît ni chanter, ni jouer de farces dans la rue, mais comme peintre d'histoire, votre enragé petit maître n'est qu'un nain

près de ce Colosse. Quand on veut louer ses amis, il faut bien se garder de certains rapprochements, et de réveiller des comparaisons qu'ils ne peuvent soutenir. Songez que le Poussin fut le créateur du paysage historique, et le maître de son gendre le Gouaspe ; et que les seuls tableaux du Déluge, et Diogène brisant la tasse, surpassent tout ce que le Salvator Rosa a fait en paysage, pour la pensée, pour la poësie, et même pour la couleur. Quant à la composition, à la gravité, et à la philosophie de l'histoire, le Poussin est peut-être le premier de tous les peintres. Il faut donc vous dire, mon cher Drôle de corps, que dans la promenade des deux sociétés qui se rencontrent, j'étois dans celle de Poussin ; et que vous m'offensez en tournant en ridicule mon patron, et ma juste admiration pour lui.

“ *Fidatevi di me*, qui vous parle de sang froid comme ami, charmé que vous ayez fait un ouvrage qui vous fera à tout jamais beaucoup d'honneur, et que j'ai lu avec cet intérêt, qui rende le succès de l'amitié si doux à partager.

“ Mille tendres amitiés bien sincères.”

“ *Le 14 Avril.*”

## EXCLAMATIONS.

COLD-BLOODED nations deal but little in exclamations ; they belong to the petulance of strong impulses, and to ardent temperaments, national and individual. The Laplanders neither invoke, exclaim, nor imprecate ; the French and Italians are continually doing all three. Quakers, whose education teaches them to "set a pulse and preach their blood to reason," scarcely ever resort to exclamations, to express their feelings. The English are not exclaimers ; their forms for this purpose are few and foolish ; and when they go beyond the *naiserie* of "dear me!" "bless me!" "my stars!" they fall into downright imprecation. The Irish, the petulant Irish, are great exclaimers. Like the Italians, they borrow their exclamations from their creed ; and when under strong excitement, pronounce in piety, that which, to the Calvinistical severity of English protestant ears, would sound very like profanation !

The Italians borrow their exclamations alike from their religion and the antique faith of their great progenitors ; and Per Bacco ! Cospetto ! “Jehovah, Jove, or Lord,” come with equal and frequent facility to their lips. They invoke, exclaim, and apostrophise, upon all occasions, trivial or important. A fishwoman in the piazza of the Pantheon, will resort to every vow and invocation of the ancient or modern faith of Rome, to dispose of her stale fish on the evening of a fast day ; and will express her surprise or indignation at an undervaluing chapman, who rejects her eels, or resists her turbot, by a volley of “*Madonna Mia's!*” “*Sacro Sacramento's,*” and “*Madre di Dio's!*” The French have a number of charming exclamations and apostrophes ; they have also many that are quaint and simple, and extremely effective in low comedy. Molière abounds in them ; and the humour and the à propos of his *ouf!* and *ouais!* is quite indefinable. Denon and I got into the habit of *ouf-ing* and *ouais-ing* at each other, until, with me, it became a *tic*, putting my native Irish “ahs!” and “ochs!” in abeyance ; and it is as much as I

can do to resist my interjectory oufs! and ouais! even on paper, and in the regular way of professed authorship!

### IRISH JUDGES.

It is extremely difficult to get the Irish to be grave upon grave subjects. With a few exceptions in favour of absolute dulness and mediocrity, all our judges are *drôles de corps*, and the highest the drollest of any. What was Joe Miller to Judge Norbury, who kept the bar in a roar for nearly half a century, and rarely passed sentence of death without making some of his auditors die laughing?

“Here is a fellow, my lord,” (said an attorney, the other day, to one of our legal chiefs,) “accused of stealing turnips; under what act can he be attacked?”

“I really don’t know,” said the judge, without taking his eyes from the paper on which he was writing.

“You don’t know, my lord?”

“No, not immediately, Mr. \* \* \* \*.”

“ What does your lordship think of the *timber* act ?”

“ Probably—that is, if the turnips were *sticky* !”

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## AT THE HEAD OF HIS PROFESSION.

DOCTOR \* \* \* \*, now so celebrated and so wealthy, served a hard probation to success. I knew him in his obscurity, and thought him then a better and an abler man, than I think him now. I saw him struggling, through all the hopeless drudgery of his profession, up to his present eminence: haunting hospitals, and bowing to Nurse Tenders. For years, he read, wrote, and lectured, and did every thing but get on—still he laughed, and talked, and was agreeable: at last he looked solemn, wore black silk stockings and creaking shoes, walked on tiptoe, and turned methodist: his success was rapid and complete; and he is now what is called—at the head of his profession!—“ *Le savoir faire vaut bien le savoir!* ”

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## THE CHARITABLE BAZAARS OF DUBLIN.

IT has been said by a classic authority, that force without judgment is overthrown by its own impetus ; and the proposition is equally true of virtue. To do good to mankind is less facile than moralists suppose. It requires something more than a mere animal impulse ; and there is much ground for doubting whether the world (at least the British world) does not suffer more from the impertinent interference of mistaken benevolence, than from the direct attacks of selfishness and malice on its order and happiness. Charity, more especially, (though, in a well ordered state, a duty whose exercise is limited within a narrow and comprehensible sphere,) becomes, under a government replete with abuses and fertile in factitious misery, a science requiring as much patient research, and as large a grasp of intellect, as any other department of politics. To be cha-

ritable on an extensive scale, is to legislate for the poor; and man, in his domestic capacity, (whatever may be thought of him as a citizen or a subject) is an animal made to think and to act for himself.

In the British empire, where every class of society is more or less dislocated, where the rewards of industry are subject to frequent revolutions, and where life is sustained by the most painful efforts, errors in the direction or energy of the charitable are doubly fatal. They are not only a waste of the scanty and insufficient resources of the multitudinous poor, a destruction of so much of the materials of happiness, but they are a direct and positive evil, deranging the economy of the lower orders, harassing them by needless and galling dictation, and destroying in their bosoms the principle of independence, without which there can be no virtue.

An high estimate of pecuniary charity in the scale of virtues is the result of incivilization, and a testimony of the barbarity of the governments where it prevails. Where the people are well governed and prosperous, the field for the exercise of this virtue is

necessarily limited ; but wherever great and terrible inequalities in human condition subsist, charity is a necessary supplement to the defective institutions, out of which they arise. In the christian world, where pecuniary liberality is dignified as a theological virtue, charity stands in the place of many more serviceable and important duties ; and much of that energy which should be given to the improvement of the political and statistic condition of the country, is wasted in a vain attempt to bolster up bad systems, and to avert by eleemosynary efforts the miseries and vices accumulated by misrule. The high and influential classes are especially prone to fall into this error. Too moral and too religious to be satisfied with the wretchedness by which they are surrounded, yet too selfish, perverse, or indolent to attempt a thorough removal of its causes, they satisfy their consciences by attempting to relieve in detail the sufferings, which their privileges and pretensions produce in the gross ; and when they have bestowed a small per centage of their overgrown fortunes upon the wretches whom their monopoly of power has impoverished and wronged, they

flatter themselves that they have done all which human sympathy or divine injunction requires at their hands.

This description of charity has been well described by a popular writer, as “other-worldly-mindedness;” and no where is it more sensitive and alive than among the aristocracy of Ireland,—a country where mendicity is national, and where religious Quixotism is carried to the fever point of exaltation and excess. Unfortunately this fiery and rampant zeal is utterly deficient in knowledge: and there is more waste of money in the city of Dublin, more direct provocation of misery by ill-contrived attempts to relieve distress, more misdirected energy, than would, if properly applied, remove, ten times over, all the pauperism of a wholesomely constituted society of the same bulk.

In a country so teeming with an unemployed population as Ireland, it certainly is not an easy matter to give a proper direction to public feeling, and to avoid falling into dangerous errors; and though it is necessary to signalize the more flagrant and mischievous abuses, and to ridicule

an all pervading folly, by which society suffers so deeply, yet it must be confessed that the individuals who come under the lash are not without some excuse. If their presumption and self-conceit are absurd and baneful, their intentions at least are often the purest and the best.

The sphere of charity, its productive power of good, being closely confined to the relief of those fortuitous evils to which the lower classes must ever be exposed, even in the best regulated societies, the moment it is applied to large categories of persons, as a remedy for permanent abuses, it becomes an unmanageable and equivocal agent of happiness, interfering with independent labour, disturbing its market, and rendering occupation precarious, and its reward fluctuating. The means which a nation possesses of employing its population are definite; and charity, in giving them a new direction, does not increase the sum: on the contrary, in as far as the process is forced and unnatural, it tends to diminish that sum by waste and mismanagement. Most of the charitable efforts which daily succeed each other for the employing the poor of Ireland, are but the pouring money

out of one pocket, to place it in another ; and if certain individuals are put to work in a new direction by the process, an equal number are inevitably thrown out of employment in some unobserved department.

This evil attaches with particular severity and mischievous effect to those associations of good and pious ladies, who either work themselves for the benefit of the poor, or find employment for them in charitable asylums, where they are enabled to under-sell and drive out of the market all competitors who are thrown upon their own resources. The money which is collected by the sale of needle and fancy work thus performed, is a direct robbery of the sempresses, who, in garrets and in cellars, strive to exist by unwearied labour. The cheap repositories that vend articles of taste, fabricated in Magdalen asylums and receptacles for the destitute, not only severely injure the shopkeeper, who pays rent and taxes for the service of the public, but, through him, strikes despair into the bosom of a large class of helpless females, who avail themselves of accomplishments, acquired in happier circumstances, to support

themselves in independence, by the only means which the perverse exclusion of women from their natural employments has left open to them. It is no justification of such establishments, that they sell only inutilities, calculated to catch a certain portion of loose cash, which otherwise would be lost to benevolence. The manufacture of inutilities, no less than that of articles of prime necessity, is the property of the working poor,—a property with which the public cannot tamper, without producing a certain evil, that is never compensated by the uncertain and delusive good expected from the process.

Among the many idle, delusive, and extravagant amusements, invented by that model of Grand Caliphs, Louis the XIVth, not the least remarkable were the shops opened in the saloons of Versailles, and kept by the king's mistresses, or the princesses of the blood, attended by cavaliers, who, though officiating as shop-boys, were chosen according to their rank and office. In these magazines, toys, trinkets, and jewels of immense value, were distributed at counters, attended by the greatest beauties and most distinguished personages at the

court ; and if the cupidity of the courtiers found its account in this prodigality, coquetry lost nothing by the assumption of a character which added the *naïveté* of the *bonne bourgeoisie* to the graces of dignity and refinement. Madame de Maintenon dwells with emphasis on the fascinations of these illustrious shopkeepers, and the elegance which presided over their counters.

The bazaars, called charitable, which, for some successive seasons have been opened in Dublin, have in their details been modelled somewhat after the manner of these *comptoirs* of Versailles. The market is generally held in some very public place ; either at the Rotunda, (a room consecrated to all public purposes,) or in an hotel or tavern. The stalls are raised on either side ; the shops are kept by ladies of the highest rank in the Irish world of fashion and charity. The work disposed of is their own ; their customers are the public at large, who are admitted on paying a shilling. The profits of the sale, of course, go to charity, sometimes at home —too often foreign,—the conversion of Jews, or the gathering of the stray sheep of Otaheite or Hindostan. The articles produced to extort the

benevolence of the customer, address themselves rather to his charity than to his taste. They are multifarious ; and if variety could compensate for want of ingenuity and of skill, there would be nothing to wish for in the bazaars of the charitable ladies of Dublin :—worsted stockings, to fit Irish giants,—bead purses, threaded by fairy fingers,—frizettes for the head, woven of horse-hair,—and slippers of hemp for the feet, as fatiguing as the tread-mill,—hearth-rugs as rugged “as a Russian bear,”—and pillows of lavender, not much smoother,—old jelly and stale cakes, which have figured at more than one tea and tract *soirée*,—and ornaments in every form, that can be produced by paste and paper, and daubed by paint,—from a pagoda to a pincushion,—of just that description which a woman of taste consigns to her housekeeper’s room, and the house-keeper, in turn, bestows on the still room, as fit for nothing but to preserve dust, and afford lurking places for spiders.

Meantime, if criticism looks on with her “eye malign askance,” in its lounge up the long line opened between the repositories of trash, there

are many whose susceptibility supplies the place at once of taste and of charity, and the bazaar is the great resort of all the *desasuvrés* of one sex, and of all the saints of the other. Among the most distinguished of the first, are the military elegants of the garrison; among the latter, are some of the highest and prettiest of the aristocracy. Placed behind piles of pincushions, each having a moral in, minikins stuck on its silken surface, or behind an outwork of paper screens, consecrated by the Lord's prayer and the commandments, stands the fair trader, with a look, "sober, steadfast, and demure," and an air of gentle solicitation, like that of the venders of royal effigies at the gate of the Tuileries, who cry, from morning till night, "*Voyez, Messieurs, voyez la famille royale de France, et la Princesse Caroline, tous pour deux sous.*"\*

I was one day much amused by observing a little scene of this sort. The finest eyes I ever saw, were doing the honours of a charitable counter, to the very best of their ability. "A

\* "Here, gentlemen, here is the whole royal family of France and the Princess Caroline, all for a penny."

*bonnes enseignes, bon vin.*" A young and gallant hussar, whose attention had wandered from stall to stall, with undefined charity, was at last attracted by the "*voyez, messieurs,*" of the eyes alluded to. The *petit commerce* once begun, it was difficult to say which party threw most enterprise and speculation into the transaction. Fly-traps were shut and opened, with suitable comments on flies and traps; tablets were displayed, whose inscriptions were only to be breathed upon, to become, like good impressions, ineffacable; Adam and Eve, with the tempter in the tree, worked on a footstool in tent stitch, were not without allusion and edification; and the history of "*Theresa Tidy*" was recommended as a *souvenir* for absent sisters, with an air which proved that saints, as well as hussars, can be good disciplinarians. The choice was at length made. It fell upon a bunch of violets, reared by the fair hands of the vender for charitable purposes. The young hussar drew it from its vase, "all dripping with dew," breathed its essence, looked full in the eyes of the *belle jardinière*, paid his sigh and his sovereign, and—was elbowed ou by a new chapman, whose aid-de-

camp's uniform gave him superior claims on the attention of the charitable bazaarist.

As I left the door of Morrison's tavern, where the scene passed, the young hussar stood waiting for his cab. A naked, shivering little girl, with a bunch of wallflowers (stuffed with grass "to make a show,") in her dirty hands, came "between the wind and his nobility;" and with the usual supplicatory drawl of Irish mendicity, solicited his attention, according to its most approved formulæ: "The Lord powr (pour) a blessing on your beautiful honour, Sir, and buy them ilitant wall-flowers for an half-penny from a fatherless orphan, that hasn't broke her fast this day, God help her." His "beautiful honour" heard her not, or valued not the liquid blessing of Heaven at the price the suppliant put upon it. He held his violets to his nose. His thoughts were behind the counter of the bazaar, and his foot on the step of his cab. After a moment's hesitation, he returned to the bazaar, and the half-penny worth of wallflowers fell to my lot.

While ignorant benevolence, and mistaken charity, fancy they are serving the great cause of

humanity, by promoting institutions which are, in fact, directly opposed to their laudable intentions, low cunning and self-love take advantage of the circumstance, by joining in a work which produces a temporary intimacy and equality between the little and the great. Many, who have no other means of getting on in society, find, in the charitable repositories, bazaars, and poor-shops, a means of introduction to its autocrats, (for even poor Dublin has its *bel air*) of acquaintance with the Countess of this, and the Marchioness of the other, the long desired object of all their struggles, hopes, and desires. Among a people essentially vain and ambitious, this sort of connexion draws in a vast number of subscribers, contributors, and labourers, to all schemes of mistaken benevolence, or quackish meddling ; and the peculiar notions of the catholics, on the necessity of a constant practice of charity, complete the sums requisite for their mischievous success.

On the privations and sufferings inflicted on the respectable and laborious poor, by such interference with the branch of industry upon which they almost exclusively rely, it would be easy

to say some eloquent things; for it is difficult to enter deeply and warmly into any subject, and not to treat of it effectually. There is no muse like being in earnest. But here is a little document, worth all that practised authorship could give on the subject, however deeply felt, or well studied. It is a letter from some poor sufferer, written in all the simplicity and integrity of conscious injury. I give it, with the too flattering letter in which it was inclosed, and which, (having received it this morning, March 29th, 1829,) directed my thoughts to the composition of this brief article. Having allied myself, from my earliest youth, to the oppressed party of my country, I have never enjoyed there but one distinction. The suffering and the unfortunate of all creeds have honoured me, by claims on my sympathy, which, alas! is frequently all I have to bestow; and I have, for many years back, been in the habit of receiving applications from the wretched, (a painful preeminence) which have included the details of almost every species of misery which flesh is heir to, from the despair of the condemned convict, who has written to me

from his cell, to the indignant repinings of neglected genius, and the eloquent recital of “all the wrongs, which patient merit from the unworthy takes.”

But to the letter, and the simple statement of the distressed female, suffering from the ladies’ charitable bazaar, which I give exactly as I received it :—

“ *To Lady Morgan, Kildare-street, Dublin.*

“ WITHOUT presuming the Irish heart of your ladyship to be at all concerned in the pernicious custom !—the enclosed alludes to, it is very humbly submitted to your kind consideration—as one looked up to—as well in national pride—as the kindness of your disposition towards every individual of your country—and as it appears the *press* (the best medium of rectifying publick evils) will not receive it—your general opinion—of the mischief it records—may go far in serving—a class of poor individuals (*your countrywomen*) labouring under the hardship it details—and layd before

your ladyship—by *one* of the oppressed sufferers—  
who has the honour to be,

“ Your Ladyship’s

“ Most obedient humble Servant,

“ A DISTRESSED FEMALE.”

“ Dublin, March 28th, 1829.”

“ To the Ladies of the late Bazaar, and those  
generally of Dublin.

“ LADIES :

“ However painful in laying before you in this public manner evils brought on a numerous class of persons—through inadvertency and want of consideration (as hunger will break through stone walls) it is necessary, in addition to many hints you have already had laid before you, to now enter into a more particular detail of the misfortune visited on many, by your establishing bazaars and other shops, to be met with in many parts of Dublin, for the sale of *ladies’ works*; nor are you to suppose in doing so, it is intended to convey any idea of your not laudably working for yourselves or families, or contributing to such charities as you

may desire to be interested in ; but in doing so, permit me to say, you should put your hands in *your pockets*, and by no means interfere with the bread of others, as you manifestedly have done. You will please to recollect that besides the more common and industrious classes of society, there are many respectable, well educated females, reduced, from *misfortune*, and not *fault*, to the necessity of earning their bread by the work of their hands ; inferior in taste, ingenuity, and acquirements, to none of their countrywomen ! now thrown on the world for want of a usual emporium for the sale of their labour ; wrought probably in filial piety for the humane and dutiful purposes of assisting an aged father or mother perishing in silent misery. For your bazaars, and from the glut of work they accumulate, prevent even shop-keepers from taking any off their hands, from the impossibility of disposing of it, as well as others purchasing those articles of taste and ingenuity, these unhappy people were wont to earn subsistence by. And really, ladies, where females are concerned, I would put it to your kind consideration, if it is consonant to the generous feelings of our soil, to thus

open the floodgates of vice, as a probable mode of preventing starvation, increasing female crime, and multiplying mendicity, in the current of misery and want.

“ Our unfortunate country labours under the severe oppression of considerable absenteeism ; but how despairingly must it indeed be felt, if those our *residents*, blessed with rank and fortune, lend their aid to increase distress in any part of the community, for the benefit of a good name ; let the object be what it may, nothing can be called charity, that uncharitably takes bread from the mouths of many.

“ And although excuses may be made for ladies of high consideration not being sufficiently acquainted, either with the nature of the trading world, or desperate state of the poor, none can, for those (some now holding titles) who have been indebted in a great measure for their present good fortune, to the benefit of fair trade, and support of the poor ; swallowing Læthean drafts and standing behind a bazaar table, inflicting in the articles they sell, misery and want on several poor creatures, their countrywomen.

“Your last bazaar, it is understood, not only netted a considerable sum of money by what it sold, but has left a great quantity of ladies’ work yet to be disposed of; and which, notwithstanding the *piety* and *charity* of the worthy females concerned, is now at *their desire*, to be got rid of by a **LOTTERY**; as well in the teeth of the acts of the legislature, as truly encouraging a species of gambling; as destructive a vice as ever (in its avaricious propensities) seized on the human heart; and this being under the description of *little-go’s*, becomes subject to magisterial interference. All this shews the quantity of work you ladies have set up against the poor and industrious fair trader, whose hands *is his or her support*, and which, evidently, you are not borne out in any interference with for any object whatsoever; or to lay the foundation of your *charities*, at the expense of the poor.

“And it is presumed, from the non-attendance of our gracious vice-queen at your bazaar, that though a stranger to our country, she has had that consideration in the benevolence of her heart, which, either through inadvertency or the fashion of the

day, appears to have escaped yours. And believe the want of emporium for sale of female works, has occasioned much trouble to her grace, by many of those starving creatures who have had no other hope of trying to get their productions off their hands, has led them to seek that commiseration from the stranger, which they have failed to receive at home. So contrary is all this to the natural goodness of heart, so wound up in our national female character, that it is indeed with pain it is adverted to, and is only attributed to the immediate desire of doing good; having in the impulse of the moment, banished that more general, reflecting, and feeling consideration. Your hearts, when thus strongly appealed to, will, I am convinced, receive in the charity and benevolence, so characteristic in the fair daughters of Erin.

“ Whose obedient servant I am,

“ PENELOPE,

“ Dublin, 23d March.

“ Out of work.”

“ Editor,” &c. &c. &c

LONDON:

SHACKELL AND RAYNS, JOHNSON'S-COURT, FLEET-STREET.

THE  
BOOK  
BOUND O. L. R.  
LADY MORGAN

"J'aurai signé par mon nom"  
MONTAIGNE

IN TWO VOLUMES  
VOL II

LONDON  
HENRY COLBURN, NEW BURLINGTON STREET  
1829

LONDON:

SHACKELL AND BAYLIS, JOHNSON'S COURT, FLEET STREET.

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cardinal to observe. I began to quote Swift's well known stanza—

“ Who can believe, with common sense,  
That bacon fried gives God offence ?  
Or that a herring has a charm,  
Almighty anger to disarm ?  
Wrapped up in majesty divine,  
Does he regard on what we dine ? ”

This was an impertinent interference ; and they answered me very sensibly, by alleging that a special providence is a dogma in all religions ; and that, at all events, they were bound to obey their church, or leave it ! They had made their election. As they took their leave, Mrs. —— came in from early service, with her prayer book in her hand, and all the anathemas of exclusive perfection in her sour face. Mrs. —— is a high-church-evangelical protestant-ascendancy lady—once well known in the caste of Dublin gaiety, though now no less distinguished in the *album sanctorum* of “ the serious.” What a look she cast on my poor little papists, as they passed her ! Excommunication by bell, book, and candlelight, and death without benefit of clergy, in every scowling lineament.

"I did not know these little bigots visited you," said the good Mrs. ——; "you are such a notorious heretic, to say the least."

"O ! I assure you the Catholic saints are much more tolerant than you Protestant saints. My attacks on Catholicism, as I found it restored in Italy by the holy alliance, have not lost me a single Catholic friend in Ireland."

"Because, after all, the papists don't care for their religion *as a religion*. Theirs is a church without a religion, you know."

"I don't answer for their zeal," (I said carelessly, for I hate religious discussions) "but I do for their sincerity, which the appearance of those poor girls attests ; they are worn to shadows by this hard lent : they do not even eat eggs or butter."

"What absurdity !" said my petulant and well-fed evangelical ; "I have no patience with it."

"But you rigid protestants fast sometimes, when your church bids you ?"

"Oh ! that is a different thing."

"No further different, than that you fast only to draw down divine vengeance on your political enemies, while they mortify their bodies for the

sake of their own souls. How Buonaparte's victories must have raised the price of salt fish ! Do you remember what a number of general fasts we had during the war ? I have often thought that we owed our success at Waterloo as much to dried ling, as to Wellington."

" Oh ! Lady M—— ! how can you joke on such solemn subjects ?"

" Joke ! why, if we are ordered to eat fish for the purpose of abating the pride and assuaging the malice of our enemies, there must, I suppose, be some efficacy in cockle sauce, and oyster *pâtes*—or why is meat proscribed ?"

" The intention of fasts is mortification, and we should abstain on such occasions from everything that administers to our appetites."

" Then you come back to the black fasts of my poor half starved little friends, which you deem an absurdity."

" But these Catholics," said Mrs. — with true lady's logic, " abstain from no pleasure that comes in their way, even on Sundays. I hear they attend your Sunday evening parties."

" I give no Sunday evening parties, my dear

Mrs. ----; but when the duties of the day are over, and every one has been at mass, church, or meeting, as opinion may lead them, I surround myself with the members of my own dear family; and if some kind and intimate friend drop in to enjoy a pleasant, rational conversation, he is sure of a place at my cheerful hearth amongst its affectionate *habitués*."

"But the sabbath is appointed to be kept holy."

"And is it not to keep the sabbath holy, to cultivate the kindest affections, and to encourage those genial sensations which lead us to live in peace with all mankind? He, whose first divine manifestation was at a wedding feast, and whose last was at the supper of the disciples he loved, has left us this, not more as a precept than a command."

"Aye, but what are your poor servants doing below stairs?"

"Precisely what their masters are doing above—enjoying innocently, and soberly, round a good fire, the rest which the sabbath brings with it—reaping the fruits of their industry in the comforts it provides them, and neither driven to a sectarian

meeting nor a public house, to pass their Sunday evenings in making bile or drinking whisky."

My saint sneered, and shook her head.

"I will not argue with *you*, Lady M——, but I will tell you what the world says;" and so having proved to me that I was considered by all the "really religious" people of Dublin as no better than one of the wicked, she made her exit, with a new accession of gall circulating through her system, and more than ever convinced, that to be happy is to be wicked !

It is strange that man, who suffers so severely from the violence of the elements, "who hath but a short time to live, and is full of misery," should go so far out of his way to multiply uneasy sensations, and should so often dash aside the enjoyment which reason sanctifies, to court the privation which nature rejects. In strong defiance of animal instinct, there has existed, at all times, a marked disposition to make a merit of self-denial and mortification, and to consider it a virtue to outrage those senses, and sadden that imagination, which were bestowed on man by the Deity, for the promotion of his happiness.

This absurd and cruel fanaticism has succeeded in masking itself alike beneath the cowl of religion, and the mantle of philosophy ; and it has allied itself, with equal plausibility, to the pride of the stoic, and to the humility of the saint. After all that we talk of the march of mind, the world has made but little progress in moral philosophy. In all ages it has been "*par les mêmes propos le même jargon* ;" and it is curious to find, in Lucian's treatise on dancing, (which is a defence of theatrical exhibitions against some *sour-craut* Prynne of the Porch,) precisely the same war between pleasure and pride, between nature and opinion, as is at this day waged in the conventicles of the sectarian zealots.

That the same practical errors, which proceeded from the self-abasement of the ascetics in the desert, should have flowed also from the stoic's lofty conceptions of human nature, is, however, more startling than unnatural. The fanaticism of honour and virtue is not less fanaticism, than that of religion ; it is not less exaggeration and irrationality. In both alike, temperament is more influential than argument, feeling more concerned than

opinion ; and both are alike founded on ignorance of the real nature of man, his organization, and his destiny.

In the earlier epochs of civilization, when the aspect of nature is rude and forbidding, and when social intercourse is replete with jealousies and dissensions, the conservative principle of life—aroused by the rough excitement to a proportionate resistance—arms itself with a corresponding insensibility to the attacks of externals. Wherever suffering habitually outweighs enjoyment, an effeminate susceptibility to trifling sensations is destroyed by the frequency of heavier miseries : and necessity develops in the mind a conscious superiority to fortune, founded on the pride of opposition, and on an intimate conviction of its own energies. The incessant warfare of savage life renders the contempt of pain and death an indispensable virtue ; and by a sophistry familiar under all circumstances, the animal forms for himself a system of notions, which strengthens him in the disposition congenial to the position of the moment. The philosophy of savages is stern, as their religion is gloomy : and

education and example are both brought to bear upon this desired case-hardening of the soul. The qualities which school-boys are taught to admire in the heroes of Roman story, exist in greater intensity among the red tribes of North America, than in the descendants of the wolf-suckled Romulus.

In the history of a campaign in Canada, mention is made of a tribe, called *The Devoted*, whose ultra-stoical notions would gain credit for the story of a Scævola or a Regulus. One of this tribe, to prove to the British officers his contempt for pain, cut a large piece from his own flesh, and flung it to the dogs. Yet these men were in the lowest condition of barbarism and social rudeness.

The external circumstances, which, by opposing man to natural evils, elevate and exalt his character, produce a very contrary effect, when they act through his misconceptions of their mysterious causes. Of physical evil the senses can judge with precision; and the individual, measuring his sufferings by his powers of resistance, acquires courage through the conviction of internal strength.

But between man; and the intangible and inscrutable agents with which fear and ignorance people the universe, to “ ride the whirlwind and direct the storm,” there is no measurement, no comparison. An intimate feeling of feebleness debases and degrades him ; and there is nothing so absurd and revolting that he will not attempt, in the anguish of his despair, to appease the phantom with which he cannot contend. Confidence in the wisdom and benevolence of the Godhead is the slow growth of developed civilization, and habitual security and ease. The divinities of barbarians are ever cruel, vindictive, and capricious ; and sanguinary and painful expiations, both personal and vicarious, are adopted, to purchase from heaven a reluctant abandonment of its threatened severity.\* The religion of savages, under whatever specious names it is covered, has ever been essentially and practically a pure diabolism. The Scandinavians alone have been able to ally the belief in powerful

\* The prevalence of these barbarous notions of the Deity, almost justifies the cynical observations of a French writer—“ Ce fut donc toujours dans l’atelier de la tristesse que l’homme malheureux a façonné le fantôme dont il a fait son Dieu.”

and malignant deities, with the courage to oppose their wrath, by an heroic daring in acting and in suffering, boundless as the power with which it ventured to dispute.

With an improvement in the destinies of the species, a change occurs both in the philosophical and the religious sentiments of nations. Upon the immense influx of wealth into Rome, which followed the conquest of Greece and Asia, vast amelioration ensued in the social condition of the people. The usurpation of Augustus was followed by a long period of peace; and the sterner virtues became unfashionable, because they were no longer compatible with external circumstances. A sudden revulsion took place in popular feeling; and the Epicurean philosophy alone found favour in the eyes of those who had the means and the leisure for enjoyment. “Thessalian portents” ceased to alarm; the Augur laughed openly in the face of his brother impostor; and the clumsy state deities gave place, in the private creed of nobler spirits, to a speculative theism; while the corrupt and the vicious (misunderstanding the language of Epicurus) were, upon system, what

the vicious and corrupt have been, and ever will be, “ upon instinct.”\*

This connexion of cause and effect triumphs even over the permanence of dogma: and a practical relaxation of morose and austere discipline has uniformly attended the improvement of the social condition, even under the prevalence of the most rigorous creeds. Christianity, emerging from the deserts of Thebaid, to take its place on the thrones of emperors, was no more the same austere and forbidding rule, than it was the simple Spen-cean democracy of its first Essenian proselytes: and the sturdy Calvinist of the north, in our own times, is a “boon companion” and a “good fellow,” in comparison with his fanatical ancestors of the third generation.

\* When this short interval of happiness closed before the tyranny of the succeeding Cæsars, the increase of the slave population, and the inroads of the northern barbarians, the human mind again relapsed into a gloomy superstition. The influx of Asiatics and Egyptians into Rome, conspiring with a strong sense of present misery, revived the taste for portents and prophecies: the fantastical religions of the east were imported, with its other products; and thus the Western World was prepared to receive those manifold corruptions of Christianity, which, under the name of church, have so long held mankind in slavery.

The susceptibility of individuals to these external causes is, however, exceedingly various. In the most relaxed, and even corrupt, periods of moral sentiment and religious indifference, there have always been found persons, whose organization of mind has alone been satisfied by an indulgence of the most gloomy views of Nature and Providence. Fanaticism is very frequently a constitutional disease. An unknown and undefined, but a very sensible impediment in the play of the more intimate functions of life, deprives the individual of that “ pleased alacrity and cheer of mind” which renders the bare state of existence delightful. There is a general insusceptibility to the minor pleasures of sense ; and the imagination is less excited by the innocent and amiable enjoyments of life. A mind thus constituted, ill at ease within itself, looks out on the world for objects congenial with its own feelings. Fear and disgust are its predominating sentiments ; and while it fabricates its deity in its own image, it is pained by the aspect of enjoyments in which it cannot participate. The hopes of another world can alone compensate for the miseries such beings inflict on

themselves in this : and while their speculative diabolism finds its account in self-tormenting, their misanthropy is indulged by imposing a similar austerity of manners, under the notion of strictness in religion, upon those who are more happily framed by nature for cheerfulness and enjoyment.

In England and Germany the prevalent disposition in religion is to gloom and mysticism ; while no effort can inoculate the French with a deep sentiment on the subject. The Irish differ, also, materially from the English in this respect. Notwithstanding the strong influence of political degradation, and the example of rigour exhibited by the prevailing methodism of the Saxon population, the Irish catholics are, for the most part, devoid of austerity of temper, though not always indisposed to needless self-denial ; and this circumstance doubtless contributes to render the people more catholic, and to indispose them for the reception of the gloomy, abstract idealism of the “ new reformation.”

Temperament operates widely and decidedly in preventing an uniform sentiment respecting the boundary between innocent and vicious indul-

gence ; and if that point were susceptible of a precise determination, the naturally morose would still continue to make inroads upon the liberty of their gayer compatriots, for no other reason than because it is their will and pleasure to do so. The most rigorous sectarians, indeed, are not consistent on this point, but are prone to relaxation in behalf of their own favourite indulgences. Those among them who are for "tenderness framed," have a patient indulgence for weaknesses, which are almost redecmed by the orthodoxy of their object ; and all excesses in the pleasures of the table, short of shameless inebriety, are permitted to the elect : while the uncharitableness preached in the pulpit does not the less find its way to the tea-table, and calumny and invective against all uncongenial offences, are doled out under the guise of zeal for uniformity of doctrine.

In England, the theoretical morality of the saints is so far above concert pitch, that humanity cannot sustain it in practice : and the result is, despair of acting up to duty, a consequent indifference to slight aberrations, and a proneness to take refuge in

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the pre-eminence of faith and the worthlessness and nothingness of all works.

An undue severity of life is much encouraged by the doctrine, that the intellectual pleasures are alone conducive to happiness, and that reason and religion alike require the submission and mortification of the senses. The intellectual pleasures do not lie sufficiently within the reach of all mankind, to render them a common object of ambition and cultivation ; and it is not fair in the educated and refined to draw conclusions from their own conceptions, applicable to those of their fellow-creatures who are less fortunately situated. To the mere labouring classes, and to many who fill a higher part in the drama of society, the pleasures of sense are the great resources against *ennui* ; and even the most fanciful sentimentalists, in enhancing the value of intellectual delights, always *understand* (as the grammarians phrase it) an abundant table, warm clothing, and comfortable dwellings, which form no inconsiderable part of those pleasures of sense, which they who preach take care to enjoy.

However low mere sensations may rank in the scale of enjoyment, they are important from their

frequent recurrence, and it is only in a certain sense that the rigorist despises them. The anchorite, who feeds on roots and water, stipulates that the former should be well boiled, and the latter pure ; and few are prepared to imitate the monkish fanaticism of mingling objects of disgust with their food, to mortify the senses. The great error, then, in comparing the intellectual and the sensitive pleasures, is the setting the use of the former against the abuse of the latter. The true sensualist, or Epicurcan, is as averse from excess as the stoic ; for he knows that excess is incompatible with health and with happiness. The senses are the creation of the same power as the intellect, and they are subservient to ends no less important in the human economy. To forbid their exercise and enjoyment, is to oppose the will and intention of Him, who made not man in his own image for the sole purpose of suffering and privation.

An old Irish woman, walking with her naked feet over some flinty stones instead of the green-sward, which offered itself to her acceptance, was asked why she chose this painful path. She replied, “ Och ! sure, I’d do more than that for sweet Jasus ! ” The world is full of such old women.

## LIBERAL ILLIBERALITY.

I REMARKED, with pain, in many of my Italian friends, who have distinguished themselves by every species of sacrifice in the cause of liberality, an affected illiberality with respect to the arts. I have seen them turn with apparent disgust from the finest works of the greatest masters, when accompanying me to the Brera, the gallery at Florence, or the Vatican. They used to say, “*There* is the cause of our ruin: we have preserved the elegant, at the expense of the useful. Raphael and Michael Angelo keep us under the Austrian yoke! Had the Russians loved the enfeebling arts, as we have done, they would never have burned their Moscow! The Venus de Medicis alone would have saved the Kremlin!”

Going one day to visit the now greatest sculptor of the age, Chantry, the gallant and celebrated General P—, having accompanied me to the door, made his bow, observing, “I have made a

vow against the arts—the more perfect they are, the more mischievous."

British *utilitarianism*, like Italian patriotism, has sometimes taken the alarm at the unproductiveness of the arts, and asserted that they are not physically necessary to our existence. Yet if the arts do not lessen positive evil, they at least augment the number of our sensitive enjoyments; and after the first necessities are supplied, all improvements in manufactures go but to that. Bread and water will support life—a hole in the earth will bid defiance to the elements—and a seal-skin in winter, and a few cockatoo feathers in summer, supply the coldest and the hottest regions with an adequate toilette. All beyond this is luxury, or means adopted to increase the sphere of pleasurable sensation, and to support a greater number of the species.

In this point of view, the fine arts are equally objects of statistic value with the useful manufactures. Their moral influence is an additional benefit. All declamation against the arts is folly, simply because they belong to the organization of man—to his love of pleasure and his ten-

dency to imitation. He who produces a fine picture, still produces ; and under that utilitarian consideration, his labour is at least as valuable as that of a goldsmith. These modern utilitarians are the Calvinists of political economy, and they strip their doctrine of so many graces, and render it such a "*Praise-God-Barbones*" sort of thing, that they will soon leave their church without a female disciple : and woe to the church, or the system, that is deserted by the women ! They who would legislate for the world, must live in the world ; and the best intentions, aided by the best talents, will be found inadequate to serve the great cause of humanity, if its schemes, though perfect in the abstract, are inapplicable in practice to the actual state of society.

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## POETS' LOVES.

“Never did poet touch a pen to write,  
Until his ink were tempered with love’s sighs.”

Poets seldom make good lovers, except on paper : there is no serving God and mammon. The concentration of thought which goes to the higher flights of composition, allows the feeling but little play. There has been much dispute, whether great actors are the dupes of their own art ; but the great actors themselves have honestly avowed that they owe their successes to their coolness and self possession ; and the poets, if they were equally candid, would own themselves in the same predicament. They are not, however, often inclined to make the confession. Horace says, “we must weep ourselves, before we can make our readers weep ;” and Pope’s, “He best can paint them, who shall feel them most,” goes very nearly to the same tune.

Passion, though eloquent, is not descriptive ;

and delights not in those details which make the essence of impressive writing. Dr. Johnson, who loved, or fancied he loved, *his* she-bear, and was, therefore, (good bruin!) the better authority on the subject, has said, that “he who woos his mistress in verse, deserves to lose her;” and there is no woman of sense, who would not come to the same conclusion. I have heard an odd, paradoxical person assign a physiological reason for this. When one great organ, he says, is much and permanently excited, the development is at the expense of all the other functions. Head workers in particular, have uniformly bad digestions ; and how can a man be heroically in love with a feeble stomach ? I, who am no physiologist, can only appeal to facts. Pope, Dryden, Swift, Racine, Boileau, La Fontaine, were none of them famous as lovers ; they had no ‘great passion,’ and excited none ; some of them were absolutely insensible to female charms, and were sceptics to their influence. *La Fontaine*, with all his *naïveté* (which is generally so indicative of passion) was as cold as an icicle. “*Je doutc*,” says Niron, his friend, “*qu'il y ait un filtre amoureux pour La Fontaine. Il n'a guère*

*aimé les femmes.*" I have some doubts of the sensibility even of the divine Petrarch, notwithstanding his thousand and one sonnets, which made so little impression on Laura. As to Ovid, his conceits are the antipodes of passion and feeling; and Anacreon was so mere a *roué*, that I should as soon take Don Juan for a martyr to the *belle passion*, as he. Cowley, who wrote so much upon love, was an anchorite. Prior, who wrote so freely on it, was a rake; and Rousseau, a poet in prose, wrote "Julie," and lived with Thérèse, who, besides being an *imbécille*, was neither chaste nor sober, and was "all for love, and a little for the bottle." When Doctor de Pruli chided Rousseau, a few days before his death, for exposing himself, in his weak health, by going to the cellar, Rousseau, pointing to Thérèse, observed, "*Que voulez-vous ? quand elle y va, elle y reste.*"\*

A propos to St. Preux and his Julie: nobody thought of visiting Switzerland for its picturesque scenery, till Rousseau brought it into fashion. Now every body goes to drop a sentimental tear at

\* "What would you have me do? When she goes to the cellar, she always stays there."

his “*rochers de Meillerie*,” and to visit *Mont Blanc*. It is well for *les rochers* that this lachrymal humour has not the properties of Hannibal’s vinegar ! What would our magazines do but for these visitors to the mountains ! I never see an article headed “*Journey to Mont Blanc*,” without being tempted to wish, that its author had done as Thérèse did by the wine cellar.

## FANS.

MADAME DE GENLIS, whose general information it would be uncandid to dispute, (though it be so frequently perverted to substantiate her favourite doctrine of the optimism of the past), has attributed the invention of that pretty bauble, the fan, to the excessive modesty of the French ladies before the revolution ! In the happy times which preceded that terrible event, the times of Agnes Sorrel, Diana of Poitiers, Montespan, Pompadour, and Du Barry, the fan, it seems, was an object of

solute necessity to screen the blushes of the timid and bashful innocents who used them. “ In times when the ladies often blushed, and desired to hide their embarrassment and timidity, they carried large fans. They were at once a veil and a *countenance*.\* By agitating the fan the female concealed herself. In the present times ladies blush but little, and are not at all timid ; they have no desire whatever to conceal themselves, and they carry only invisible fans, (*des éventails imperceptibles*).”

What a falling off since the times of the Palais Royal, and of the *petits soupers* at Monceaux, when the king’s mistresses displaced his ministers, and made out plans of campaigns with their rouge, and patches for field marshals ; when the de Boufflers and the Luxembourghs, the highest rank and oldest blood in France, were candidates on the list of royal concubinage ; when nothing was natural but the children, and nothing moral but that which was past the power of sin. These were the times, the only times, when Frenchwomen

\* Dans le tems où l’on rougissait souvent, où l’on vouloit dissimuler son embarras et sa timidité, on portait de grands éventails. Aujourd’hui l’on ne rougit pas, &c. &c. &c.—MAD. DE GENLIS.

blushed, and used fans : and well they might ! Let Madame de Genlis compare the Orleans family in the time of Louis the Fourteenth, when the duke poisoned his wife ; in the time of the regency, as reported by the Dowager Duchess of Orleans herself ; in the time of the husband or lover of her aunt, Madame de Montesson, and in the time of her own friend *Egalité* ; and let her compare these Orleans with the Orleans of the present times, the model of husbands, fathers, citizens, and princes—schooled, not by the lessons given in the cloisters of *Belle Chasse*, but by those of the world and of the circumstances in which he has lived—and then talk of anti-revolutionary modesty and timidity, and the origin of fans ! The fan, like every thing else, applicable to human use, has its origin in necessity. It is purely an oriental fashion, and was invented for personal relief and convenience in those ardenter climates, where such portable ventilators and shades were indispensable. A Chinese dandy would no more be seen without his fan, than a Chinese belle ; and the fan of the Rajah serves far better purposes, than concealing the blushes and embarrassment of his wives. The

fans of the east are made of feathers. The domestic fans of Spain are suspended from the ceiling of the apartments over the tables, from which, during dinner, they keep off insects.

The fan was early introduced into the Roman church,—when the christians removed from the “cool grots and mossy cells,” in which their pure and persecuted sect was obliged to celebrate its devotions, to those superb temples, where the consecrated fans of infallibility, borne before the pope, still shew that even infallibility is no proof against heat.

The fan, likewise, makes a part of the ceremonies of the Greek church; and is placed in the hands of the deacon, on the day of his consecration, in allusion to his office of keeping off the flies from the priests, while they officiate. This must be a sinecure in Russia; but the form survives the want; and woe to the infidel, who, in that region of ice, would propose a *chaufferette*, to replace the fan established by the church and state, at some glorious and immortal epoch.

Fans came into England, with other eastern objects of use, ornament, or curiosity. The fan

with which Queen Elizabeth is said to have graciously tapped an Irish lord lieutenant, (Sir J. Perrot,) would knock down a modern courtier. In the time of Charles the Second a French fan was a fatal gift. That which saved the modesty of Madame de Genlis's Dianas, purchased too often the honour of the Maid of Honour of the English court. The Duchess of Portsmouth, of course, brought over her own fan from the Palais Royal; from which she was despatched by the Duchess of Orleans, to rule over the heart and councils of the king of England: and, above all, to secure the king's salvation, by enabling him to live and die "*ferme catholique*," which he did.\* The zeal and the views are the same: the form only differs. Other times—other modes.

The fan, however, was not the great rampart thrown up before the citadel of English modesty, under the Stuarts. The modesty of those times had a strange habit of going to see plays so immodest, that it was deemed necessary to cover the face "*pour dissimuler son embarras*;" and the

\* Charles the Second died in the arms of the Church and the Duchess of Portsmouth.—See DALRYMPLE.

mask was discarded to, while the fan was simply retained, then, and for a century afterwards, for the only and innocent purpose of

“ Giving coolness to the matchless dame—  
To every other breast, a flame.”

The tactics and manœuvres, necessary for the operating of these double purposes, produced the well known “ exercise of the fan,” so delightfully detailed, for the benefit of posterity, in that treasure of a work, the *Spectator*.

At last, in the decadence of manners, (historically marked in the memoirs of a fan, and its philosophy, as clearly as in the decline and fall of empires,) this elegant little implement of the coquetry of our ancestresses fell to be an article of mere utility—returning, as all things must, to its origin.

Our mothers and aunts appeared, during summer, with a good housewife-like green fan, to keep off the sun: for “ *l'affaire du parasol*,” for which Louis the Fifteenth was obliged to issue a decree, had not yet travelled into Great Britain; and the fan of “ *ma tante Aurore*” was the only

fan known to our aunt Tabithas. French philosophy, and a total abandonment of the constitution of 1688, at length banished this instrument as an indispensable part of the toilette. The parasol was found more convenient; and the fan, only employed to “cool the matchless dame” after a walk through a quadrille, or a lounge through a waltz, was reduced to that fairy size to which Madame de Genlis gives the reproachful title of *éventail imperceptible*. “The history of fashions is not so frivolous as has been imagined; it is, in fact, the history of manners,”—and so far, *je suis d'accord*, with the venerable, but not very veracious, historian of the “*Fan*.”

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## NO ONE'S ENEMY BUT HIS OWN.

"No man's enemy but his own" happens generally to be the enemy of every body with whom he is in relation. The leading quality that goes to make this character, is a reckless imprudence, and a selfish pursuit of selfish enjoyments, independent of all consequences. "No one's enemy but his own" runs rapidly through his means ; calls, in a friendly way, on his friends, for bonds, bail, and securities ; involves his nearest kin ; leaves his wife a beggar ; and quarters his orphans upon the public ; and, after having enjoyed himself to his last guinea, entails a life of dependance on his progeny, and dies in the odour of that ill-understood reputation of harmless folly, which is more injurious to society, than some positive crimes. The social chain is so nicely and delicately constructed, that not a link snaps, rusts, or refuses its proper play, without the shock being felt like an electric vibration to its utmost limits.

## VULGARITY.

THERE is nothing so hopeless as vulgarity—genuine vulgarity, arising from presumption and want of tact, united to the peculiar demonstrative habits of humble life. The strongest illustration of this species of vulgarity will be found in Ireland, where the national vanity forces all qualities into evidence. It is often accompanied by the conscious possession of some moderate talent, or some serviceable qualification, which carries the possessor out of his natural orbit, into higher circles, where he is adopted either as an available agent, or an amusing ridicule. In this position, vulgarity comes out in its strongest relief; and if it be not utterly disgusting, by being excessively obtrusive, it is often very humorous and very absurd. This is the vulgarity which furnishes mystification to society, and character for rovels; supplying the Lord Charleses with vastly good fun, and such writers as the authors of “The Absentee” and the

"O'Briens," with their Sir Phelims and their Captain O'Mealys. Easy assurance; a presuming familiarity, on the slightest grounds, with persons of superior rank; obtrusiveness, without reference to time, place, or persons; a clipped but not mitigated brogue, gesticulation, and a sort of posture-master's attitude; frequent reference to "honour," and "credit;" the dropping of titles when speaking of the qualified, and an affected condescension when speaking to equals, are among the generic signs of the incorrigibly vulgar of that country, where it is the ambition of all to be supremely genteel.

In England, the classes and degrees of society are defined by such strong lines of demarcation, that there is less play given for pretension to exhibit its absurdities; and even the vulgarity of cockneyism is less striking and less humourous, than the vulgarity of the social *parvenus* of Irish circles. In either instance, confine the patient within the limits of his own proper and natural sphere, and the vulgarity that disgusts, or amuses when displaced, loses its sharpness, as engravers say,

for the true and abundant source of all vulgarity is pretension.

Nobody is struck by an apparent vulgarity in the smart young shopman, who officiates behind the counter of one of the great "*houses*" (formerly shops) in Waterloo Place or Oxford Street, and who, simply labouring in his vocation, is as much what he ought to be, as "*comme il faut*," as the duchess, who tosses over his crêpes, cachemirs, and merinos, as if the looms of France, Spain, and India were mounted and worked "solely for her use." But take this Dick, the apprentice of Grafton House, or of the Magazine of Fashion, in his opera hat, at a ball at the Crown and Anchor, or "playing the fine" at a "great to do" at Mrs. Mango's, and you have the delightful Magnus Apollo of Snow Hill,—the "sprightly young man" of the Miss Branston's first floor.

Besides this highest and most dramatic order of vulgarity, in which temperament and circumstances alike combine, there is a sort of conventional vulgarity, found occasionally in all ranks and classes,

and which is only termed vulgarity, because it does not submit to be wound up and set, by the great regulator of fashion. This species of vulgarity, which is in fact no vulgarity at all, though it be a dereliction from the standard manner of a particular circle, is generally the result of early associations, and of great animal spirits overcaping the boundaries prescribed by cold, quiet, still-life *bon ton*; for that style of manners which has become a doctrine, is but the result of a phlegmatic temperament, inherited with the old blood of ancient descent.

Pope, with a sort of physiological poetry, has applied the term “creep,” to the languid circulation of “ancient but ignoble blood.” To be what is called “*trop prononcé*,” (for the dogmas of modern fashion, like the old English laws, are all given in French) is a misprision of vulgarity, frequently detected even in the very highest classes; and no coronet, however knobbed, can save its wearer from the imputation, if she is once convicted of the high crime and misdemeanour of being too “*démonstratif*” of her feelings, prepossessions, humours, or opinions.

I remember hearing one duchess say of another,

“ She is amusing, but she is insufferably vulgar.” Both their graces were equally influential at the head of their respective and particular circles: the more elegant duchess was by temperament, and by British aristocratic breeding, endowed “with all her sex’s softness,” and with all that quiet assumption of dignity, which “comes but by the aid of use.” The more *demonstrative* grace, with a highland temperament, and spirits bright and elevated as the region that produced them, was perpetually bounding over the lines of circumvallation drawn by the *bon ton* against the inroads of nature. Betrayed frequently into coarseness, she was still never vulgar—for assumption, and not pretension, was the failing of the clever, brilliant, but *trop prononcée* Duchess of G——

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## HUMAN PARROTS.

THERE are persons deficient in the stuff which makes intellect, just as there are individuals born without some particular sense. Incapable of originating ideas, because impenetrable to the impressions whence ideas come, they have memories instead of minds. They retain words: and, in giving them utterance, depend upon accident for the justice of their application.

One of these human parrots was present the other day, when Mr. C—— said, "Such an one cannot last; his physical force is quite gone." A few days afterwards, the parrot, in quoting the observation, remarked, "C. says he cannot live much longer, for his physic is out."

It is truly astonishing how little talent suffices to get on in the world. The instinctive cunning observable in children and animals, is equal to the wants and desires of the individual; and the un-

ideal babble and animal vivacity of the parrot, pass for information and agreeableness: while genius and feeling, obstructed at every step by dulness and prejudice, or revolted at the meanness and littleness which thwart them, stop short in the first stage of their route, and recoiling on themselves, too often live unknown and unbefited by the world they enlighten and amuse.

## CATS.

IN old family portraits, the ladies are painted with birds or animals as the accessories of the picture. Such playthings were, in fact, the great resources of our female ancestors, whose uneducated minds, and unsocial position (when there were neither books nor assemblies) threw them upon dogs, monkeys, parrots, and cats, as a refuge from *ennui*. Fondness for animals arises out of the idleness of barbarism, as the tolerance of the various nuisances they occasion does from its

coarseness. It is not, however, the less true, that the playful kitten, with its pretty little tigerish gambles, is infinitely more amusing than half the people one is obliged to live with in the world.

I have observed, that all domestic animals are more amiable and intelligent on the continent, than with us: it may be they are better treated; for nothing tames like kindness. The fine breed of Angola cats, so common in the South of Italy, is a proof of the assertion; they are much caressed and attended to, and are as intelligent and as attachable as dogs. The first day we had the honour of dining at the palace of the Archbishop of Taranto, at Naples, he said to me, " You must pardon my passion for cats (*la mia passione gattesca*), but I never exclude them from my dining-room, and you will find they make excellent company."

Between the first and second course, the door opened, and several enormously large and beautiful cats were introduced; by the names of Pantalone, Desdemona, Otello, and other dramatic *cognomina*. They took their places on chairs near the table, and were as silent, as quiet, as motionless and as well behaved, as the most *bon-ton*

table in London could require. On the bishop requesting one of the chaplains to help the Signora Desdemona to something, the butler stept up to his lordship and observed, “Desdemona will prefer waiting for the roasts.” After dinner they were sent to walk on the terrace, and I had the honour of assisting at their *coucher*, for which a number of comfortable cushions were prepared in the bishop’s dressing-room. The Archbishop of Taranto, so well known through Italy as the author of many clever works, has also produced one on cats, full of ingenuity and pleasantry.

On my return from Naples, and during our second happy residence in Milan (the remembrance of which is now clouded and embittered by the horrible fate of those superior beings, who were the cause of that return and that residence), I happened to mention my observation on the sensible character of the animals of the south of Italy, and of the *douceur* and intelligence of the archbishop’s beautiful Desdemona; when the young and gifted author of “Francesca da Rimini” (who now lies buried in his living tomb—an Austrian *carcere duro*), related to me the story of a

“*passione gattesca*,” which had recently occurred in a neighbouring village, perfectly illustrative of my hypothesis—here it is:—

“*Il Gatto del Cimitero.*”

THE CAT OF THE CEMETERY.

A BEAUTIFUL peasant girl of the village of Monte-orsano, in the Brianza, had obtained a sort of melancholy celebrity by an infliction, which frequently struck her down to the earth, in the midst of the village festival, or church ceremony, where her beauty and piety were the boast and the edification of her village friends. Every physician in Lombardy, every saint in the calendar, had been applied to, on behalf of *Clementina*; and vows and offerings had been made in vain, to cure, what was incurable, a confirmed epilepsy. If the saints, however, were negligent, Clementina had one friend, whose vigilance never slumbered. It was her cat; which not only shared her bed and her *polenta*, but followed her in her walks and devotions, from the vineyard to the altar.

The first time that *Mina* saw her young mistress

fall in a fit, and wound herself against a tomb in the village cemetery, she exhibited the most extraordinary emotion. She soon acquired the habit, from a frequent recurrence of the infirmity, of watching its approach ; and at last seemed to have obtained such a knowledge of the change of countenance and colour, which preceded the attack, that she was wont, on the first symptom, to run to the parents of Clementina, and, by dragging their clothes, scratching at their persons, or mewing in the most melancholy manner, (" *Miagolando in tuono mesto ed affannoso,*" ) she succeeded in awakening their attention, and trotted out before them, mewing them on to the spot, where her young mistress lay lifeless. Mina at last obtained such confidence for her warnings, that, on the first cry of the faithful cat, the friends of Clementina flew to her assistance before she incurred any injury from her sudden fall.

At fifteen, the malady of the beautiful Clementina brought her to the tomb. Her cat walked after her bier, on which she was exposed, (as is the custom in Italy), and covered with flowers. During the funeral service, she sat at the head of the bier, gazing with an intent look on the lifeless features

of her young mistress ; and when the grave was filling, she made a vain endeavour to jump in, but was withheld by the bystanders, who carried home this chief mourner after the melancholy ceremony. Mina, however, was seen the next morning stretched upon the new made grave, which she continued to visit daily, until she visited it for the last time, a few months after her friend's death ; when she was found dead upon the green mound that covered her remains.

The celebrity of the "*Gatto del Cimitero*," has not yet passed away from the village of Monte-orfano. I dedicate this little history of the faithful *Mina*, to my young friend *Ina*; whose "*passione gattesca*," entitles her to the distinction. Kindness to animals is but a form of sensibility, and in youth is always the harbinger of higher and deeper-seated feelings. It should not be confounded with the misplaced instinct of maternity in childless old maids, or the capricious fondness of adults for the brute creation, which is unaccompanied by any touch of kindness for their biped dependants, or any manifestation of sympathy for human misfortune.

## TRADES, PROFESSIONS AND SCIENCES.

TRADES, professions, manufactures, even the sciences, the divine sciences themselves, come in and go out of fashion with times and circumstances ; and to talk of permanency, of stopping short at particular epochs and eras (always so sacred with dullness and ignorance), is to speak a language utterly inapplicable to truth, nature, and society. Many of the trades which were in vogue so recently as the time of the two first Georges, are passed and gone. Fifty years ago, London and Paris abounded with fan painters. Some of the most noted artists among the contemporaries of Sir Joshua Reynolds began life in this department of their profession ; and they made more money by sprawling shepherdesses in bell-hoops, upon banks of roses, attended by squinting shepherds with bag-wigs and bouquets, than some scores of young painters can now acquire by copying the works of Titian, or catching the beauties of Raphael. Then there

was the coach-pannel painter, belonging to times when the visiting chariot of a lady of fashion bore her device and cognizance on her carriage, like the knight of old on his shield and target: when the loves and the graces, with turtles, trophies, and wreaths of roses, were sported in the park and the ring, to the admiration of the pedestrian multitude, and the substantial comfort of the unambitious and unknown artist.

I remember having seen one of these antiquated teams of taste of the good old times, creeping along a cross road in Picardy, on my first visit to France. How different from a modern “drag” of dash, shaped and coloured like a mail coach, as strong and as ungainly, and decorated with pointers and race-horses ! It enshrined a dowager anti-revolutionary beauty, much more freshly painted than her *voiture coupée*, and almost in as many colours. She bore in her hand a fan *to match*, that was an historical picture of the court of Louis the XVth ; and her hair was dressed with a *tête*, surmounted by a *petite cornette*, *qui ne laissait rien à désirer*, in the eyes of the true virtuoso of highly preserved antiquities. The carriage, the fan, the *coiffure*, were all alike

the production of arts long now gone by. Oh ! how I should have liked to seize upon the whole set-out, and place it under a glass case !

I have a family on the list of my visiting book, scarcely less curious in their way, than these Picardy relics ; fit for the cabinet, and worthy to be preserved as dried specimens of a phasis of society which history will never record.

The painted carriage was unknown in the time of Henry the IVth of France, who tells Sully that he cannot visit him on a certain occasion, because his wife had “*mon carrosse*,” the only carriage belonging to the royal establishment. The fashion of splendidly decorating coaches, began in the middle of Louis the XIVth’s reign, and it ended, in England, in the reign of George the 1st. The most gorgeous carriage on record, was that which the ingenuous sycophancy of Bernini painted for Christina of Sweden, on the occasion of her visit to Pope Alexander the VIIth, when she went to Rome, to make a public abjuration of Lutheranism. “ She was received,” says a curious old work I picked up on a stall in the Piazza Navona in Rome, “ with unspeakable applause ;” and among other “*regali*”

presented her by the Pope, were a coach, a litter, a sedan chair, and a hackney. The description of these articles is curious, and belongs to times and trades now no more.\*

Some traces of the expense and magnificence of coach decorations still remain in the state carriage of the Lord Mayor of London, which has survived many more important monuments of the taste and the judgment of our ancestors. Whether the painting of pictures on coach panels was driven out by heraldic pride, or fell merely by the caprice of fashion, I cannot say. It is most probable that the custom was itself an innovation upon armorial bearings, to which it in turn gave place. In the early period of the revolution, when the emblazoning of arms was forbidden, some of the bolder members replaced their escutcheon on their carriages, by the

\* "Era la carrozza tutta d'argento con statue, figurine intaglio et inprese misteriose, d'invenzione del Cavalier Bernini, con la fodera e le coperte di velluti di color celeste, tirata da sei corsieri leardi ; coi finimenti dello stesso drappo ; come pure del medesimo erano adornati i cocchieri, la lettica, e la sedia, e le coperte dei muli e della Chinea, il tutto tempestuti di brocche massiccie d'argento e ornato da diversi lavori superbi dello stesso metallo."—*Plutina Vite de' Pont.*

representation of the sun behind a cloud, with the motto—" *ça reparoîtra*."

Almost in our times, great has been the downfal of wig-makers, who, for more than a century, engrossed so large a portion of the public money. In the time of Queen Anne, thirty guineas was the price of a full fledged perriwig, an enormous sum for those days. As the beaux laid down false hair, the women seem to have adopted its use. Under the names of systems and *têtes*, thcse filthy appendages maintained their ground in Ireland to a late period. The last " system, *tête*, and peruke-maker," I saw, was in my childhood, in Connaught, and so I handed him over to the Miss Mac Taafs, for their city of Craiggellan, where he figures in the person of Gil-Duff O'Kirwan. The "system" was a high cushion of horse-hair. I saw it worn by an itinerant schoolmistress, brought into my father's house, to teach me my letters, and to work a sampler, when I was about four years old. Her figure and system got such a hold of my imagination, that, " not on the book my eyes were fixed, but her." " That fairy form," (which was six feet high,) " I have ne'er forgot"—

The system was a most complicated affair. Men served an apprenticeship to learn its architecture. The cushion was but a scaffolding, on which the superstructure was supported, which rose by the foot ; while curls, “*en canon*,” massy as rolling stones, were piled on each other, till they made “Ossa like a wart.”

These adscititious monstrosities were beginning to disappear, when Mr. Pitt, by the hair-powder tax, gave a death blow to the trade of hair-dressing. It has been said, I know not with what truth, that the idea of this tax originated with Lewis the actor, and that he was handsomely rewarded for the invention. At this period, the Brutus head, and the close-cropped *tête à la victime*, were adopted as tests of republicanism in France ; as the round head was made a mark of covenantism in the English revolution ; and this fashion aided and abetted the destruction of the loquacious tribe of tale-bearers.

It is one of the blessed effects of the diffusion of knowledge, to render men less dependent on others ; and society seems to have rejoiced in its emancipation from the tyranny of hair-dressing.

Formerly the barber's knock was as well known, and as punctual as the postman's. His important visage, sagacious look, and his bag of apparatus, belonged as much to the objects of daily vision, as the place in which he was received. There, for one mortal hour at least, and that at the most precious and active period of the day, sat the victim of fashion with its minister, bound tightly up in a white cloth, like a baby in swaddling-clothes, sometimes pulled by the nose, sometimes scored on the check, and often in danger of an unlucky cut across the throat;—then again, smoked and smothered with the vapours reeking from the curling iron, which dragged up his hair by the roots; while his drawn-in breath, clenched hands, closed lips, and puffed cheeks, spoke all the torture of his voluntary suffocation. The whole sad scene terminated in a dense cloud of musty powder, discharged from the notable puffing machine into every exposed orifice, filling the ears, ascending the nostrils, and blinding the eyes of the sufferer. Yet the wisdom of our ancestors looked upon this daily martyrdom and perpetual disfiguration as indispensable to the appearance of a gentleman.

Even tradesmen gave up their time and persons to this voluntary immolation ; and assisted to people the good old times with monsters, and to support trades, which, making no return, diverted industry from more profitable channels.

Franklin, when ambassador to France during the American war, frequently expressed his regret that the *corps de friseurs* was not placed at his disposition, to fight the English ; and that the money expended on hair-powder was not devoted to powder of more inflammable and explosive properties. The use of hair-powder, however, encouraged the landed interest,—a saving virtue ; and if it raised the price of bread, there was, as the French king has it, the charity of the nation to supply the deficiencies of the poor—a right royal specimen of political economy.

Hair-dressing, moreover, had its indirect advantages, by encouraging literary propensities ; many worthy persons took the opportunity of lining the inside of their heads, while the barber decorated its outward parts, who would never otherwise have found leisure for “improving the mind.” In those days, a play-book or a pamphlet was sure to be

whitened, in every third page, by the contents of the power-puff. Hairdressers were also serviceable to their species, by maintaining and diffusing a taste for anecdote. Even ministers of state were occasionally indebted to the *coiffeur* for their principal knowledge of human nature, and for the better part of their wit.

The ministerial influence of barbers has ever been considerable. The grand sultan's barber is, to this day, the pivot of affairs, the focus of revolutions, the ladder of rising fortunes, and the Tarpeian rock of functionaries on the wane. Under Louis the Fourteenth, the *coiffeurs*, male and female, were important personages ; and they figure largely in the memoirs of that day. Martin la Vienne, and Mademoiselle la Borde, have become historical characters, as much as the heroes and beauties they dressed ; and the “*coiffure à la paysanne*,” and “*les bâcles de Montgobert*,” form epochs in the history of nations. Under the regency, an “*Encyclopédie Perruquière*” appeared, illustrating the mysteries of the craft by one hundred and twenty engravings of different orders of *perruques*, which gave the idea, some years after-

wards, of a work on the same plan, by *Le Sieur le Gros, coiffeur* to the court of Louis the Fifteenth. The solemn importance attached to this volume by its author, who announced it to the great Catherine of Russia, is an admirable satire on the frivolity of the day ; the title was “*Livre d'Estampes de l'Art de la Coiffure des Dames Françaises, gravés sur les dessins originaux d'après mes accommodages, avec le Traité en abrégé d'entretenir et de conserver les Cheveux naturels.*”\*—And yet Madame de Genlis says, “*Il y a quarante-cinq ans que les femmes auroient trouvé de l'indécence à se faire coiffer par des hommes.*”† M. Le Gros gave a still further dignity to the art, by opening an academy, which he divided into the same number of classes as the academy of sciences at Paris; and actually furnished it with thirty models, that were not exactly “*d'après l'antique.*”

Under Louis the Sixteenth, the hair-dressers are said to have been accompanied by *les physiogn-*

\* A book of engravings of the art of hair-dressing for the ladies of France, after my own designs, with an abridged treatise on the conservation of the natural hair.

† “Five and forty years ago, the women would have thought it indecent to have their hair dressed by men.”

*mistes*, who pronounced on the style to be adopted on each head, according to the nature of the countenance. One of these Lavaters of the toilet entering, with his employer, into the dressing-room of a new patient, fresh arrived from England, threw him into no small consternation by the earnestness of his scrutinizing regard. Full of John Bullish notions, of French tyranny, *lettres de cachet*, and, of course, of his own importance in the eyes of the government, the Englishman saw nothing in the penetrating looks of the artist, but *espionnage* and “*à cul de basse fosse*:”—he was actually preparing for a knock-down blow, and a run, when the solemn figure relieved him from his fright, and left the room, exclaiming, “*Figure de marron, marronnez Monsieur.*”

The revolution came, and kings and *coiffeurs* fell together.—Nature vindicated her rights—hair-dressers lost theirs—and beauty and purity resumed their privileges under the name of Greek costume.

The enameller was also, in former times, a profession of much profit and occupation: not such enamellers as the Bones and Bates of the present

day, nor as the *Petitots* of the past ; but good tradesman-like artists, who kept shops well stored with enamelled snuff, patch, and rouge boxes, and every article of domestic usage, to which they could apply their art. Who, that ever rummaged her mother's drawers, and found the watch-chains of her grandmother, ponderous as jack-chains, and fastened with hooks massy as flesh-forks, does not remember the enamelled trinkets suspended from it—eggs, anchors, bird-cages, and watch-boxes, with bottles for bergamotte, and beetles filled with thieves' vinegar, (the *eau de cypre*, and the *mille-fleurs* of the *belles* of the last century, who always smelted like a pot of pomatum, or a pickled cucumber)?—the least prized of the senses has its march of intellect, *tout comme un autre*, and the strength of perfumes is no bad indication of the state of society.

But, alas, for the sciences ! that they too should “ bear but the perfume and suppliance of a moment ;” and be brought in and out of fashion, like a *beret* of *Herbault*, or a *robe* of *Victorine*. Yet so it is, and was, and ever will be, as the wants and

exigencies of society have occasion for the aid of different pursuits.

Towards the end of the reign of Louis the Fourteenth, and the beginning of that of Louis the Fifteenth, (including the regency,) astronomy, taking the place of polemics, raged like an epidemic. Men, women, and children, leaving this world to take care of itself, got into “other and better worlds;” and wits, lost on earth, were all to be found, like Orlando’s, in the moon. Women’s eyes were no longer the only lights that helped poets to similes. Celestial bodies succeeded to terrestrial; Love, no longer blind, never appeared without a telescope; rendezvous were given in *bosquets* and on terraces, to gaze on the “chaste cold moon;” hearts and planets disappeared together; and ladies were so intently engaged in studying the principles of Newton, that they forgot their own; and gave practical demonstration that, in going astray, women’s “stars are more in fault than they.”

But when Newton had ceased to act upon the imagination, by fresh discoveries of striking and

impressive import, the astronomers became *mauvais ton*; and the Parisian women of fashion took to pet geometers, as the *pendants* for their pet monkeys. D'Alembert became the *Coryphaeus* of the French boudoirs; and the Tencins, and the Du Deffands fought for the possession of the least gallant man and the first geometrician of his age; who, in his turn, made way for chemistry and Lavoisier.

The English, who have been called a nation of shopkeepers, and who mingle trade even with their love of science, took to chemistry with an enthusiasm proportioned to its utility in the arts; much in the same way as the kings and nobles of a former age had brought alchemy into vogue, as an instrument of their avarice. Although natural history entered the lists with its experimental rival, and canvassed for vogue in the library of Sir Joseph Banks, oxygen and hydrogen carried the field; and Sir Humphry Davy, with his class of aristocratic beauties in the west, was as much revered as the “*premier baron de la Judée*” is in the east.

Chemistry, however, has had its day; and the Ricardos and Malthuses have succeeded, to turn the

heads of those, whom nature intended only to turn the heads of others—to be succeeded in the next generation by—God knows what. In France, the once popular electricity of Franklin, and the cognate study of the magnet, have given birth to the reigning folly of Mesmerism; and in England, the popular labours of the Hunters have terminated in the current vogue of craniology. Who can answer for it, that the necessities of no-popery may not revive the witchcraft of King James, and call to its aid the penal *dicta* of some new Matthew Hale, for the better putting down of dangerous papists?

Even the divine arts, which are of all ages, have experienced the full versatility of human affairs. Protestantism made war upon the successors of the Raphaels; and great pictures went out, with great cathedrals and great palaces. Pitt dealt a severe back-handed blow to engraving; while wealth, snugness, and personal vanity, combined to give currency to portraits of gentlemen and ladies. Now, we have lithography opening a new career to genius and industry; and every day teems with fresh discoveries, all, more or less, influencing the destiny of the imitative arts.

Neither are the learned professions built upon a more solid foundation. Theology, notwithstanding the fashionable sanctity, is obsolete ; law is at a considerable discount, and physicians are set on one side, to give place for the triumphal car of surgery. The fact is, that society, like nature, bent on its own great purposes, steadily pursues the course of its interests ; and it sustains, for the moment, those pursuits, and those only, for which it has an immediate and pressing occasion. It is in vain that we look for the architectural skill which raised the ponderous temples of Egypt, or the more graceful, but less substantial, edifices of Grecce. Mortar and Roman cement have substituted the Nashes and the Wyatvilles, for the *protégés* of the Ptolemys and Pericles ; and the reign of George the Fourth cannot, in physical possibility, become the age of Augustus. The house of brick, will never become the house of marble.

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## MR. OWEN'S TUNIC.

TALKING the other day of small rooms and glaring lights, where all is in evidence, I made them my excuse for indulging in a tendency to make up my coterie of pleasant men and pretty women, and to keep out the twaddles of both sexes, for which I am much abused. It is not long since a philosophical friend of mine, one always deeply occupied in promoting the highest and best interests of society, by perfecting science in its most sublime and useful directions, called on me, and found me most frivolously, but earnestly, employed in filling up cards for a very small party. "I am come," he said, "to ask a favour." I started: for, delighted as at all times I am to improve my society by enlisting him amongst its members, I was yet terribly afraid he was going to ask leave to bring with him some of those young disciples, who flock to his class from all parts of Europe, but who (un-

less one could *ticket* them) do not answer quite so well for a fashionable party, as for a laboratory or a dissecting room. I was really, therefore, never more relieved, than when I found it was not a card for my *soirée* he wanted, but only my head, literally and truly my head;—that is, be it understood, when the commodity should no longer be of use to its owner. I readily gave him a *post-obit* on the only productive estate I ever possessed, delighted to save my “at home” even at so capital an expense.

It would, however, be a mistake, to accuse me of aristocratical leanings with respect to society. Something I must have—worth, wit, rank, fashion, beauty, notoriety, or an old friend. I will take even a diamond necklace, or an hussar suit of regiments, value one hundred pounds, with, or without the wearer: but I do not want what musical cognoscenti call “*perruque*;” because I have no spare space to fill up, no corners to cram, like people who have large houses.

*A propos* to an untenanted uniform and an unappropriated necklace—by way of lion, I once hung up on the divisions of my bookcase a little tunic;

and it made the *frais* of my party, by giving rise to an infinity of fun, and some philosophical, though humorous, conversation. On the previous morning, the most benevolent, amiable, and sanguine of all philanthropists called on me, with a countenance full of some new scheme of beneficence and utility. It was Mr. Owen, of New Lanark, whose visits are always welcome in Kildare-street, though so “few and far between.”

As soon as we had sunk into our arm-chairs, and put our feet on the fender, and before we had got on the usual topics of parallelograms and perfectibility, New Lanark and a new social system, he began,

“ My dear Lady Morgan, you are to have a party to-night.”

“ To be sure, my dear Mr. Owen, and one made expressly for yourself. You are my lion : I hope you don’t mean to jilt me.”

“ By no means ; but I have brought you a better lion than I could prove.”

“ I doubt that ; but who is he ? where is he ?”

“ In my pocket.”

“ You don’t say so : is it alive ?”

"Here it is," said Mr. Owen, smiling; and drawing forth a little parcel, he unfolded and held up a canvas tunic, or chemise, trimmed with red tape.

"I want you," he added, "to assist me in bringing into fashion this true costume of nature's dictation, the only one that man should wear."

"But woman, my dear Mr. Owen?"

"Or woman either, my dear Lady."

"Consider, Mr. Owen, the climate!"

"Your face does not suffer from it."

"But then again, the decencies?"

"The *decencies*, as you call them, Lady M——, are conventional—they were not thought of some years ago, when you were all dressed in the adhesive draperies of antiquity, like that beautiful group on your chimney-picce. You see there the children of Niobe wore no more voluminous garments than my tunic;—that lovely child, for instance, which Niobe is endeavouring to save from the shafts of Apollo. And yet none of your fine gentlemen or ladies are shocked by the definition of forms, which have ever been the inspiration of

art. I assure you I have already got several ladies to try this tunic on—”

“ Oh ! Mr. Owen !!!”

“ On their little *boys*, Lady Morgan ; and if I could only induce you to try it—”

“ Me, my dear Mr. Owen ! You surely cannot suppose—”

“ I don’t ask you to *wear* it, Lady M—— : all I beg for the present, is, that you will give it a trial, by showing it off at your party to-night—recommend it, puff it off !”

*Quitte pour la peur*, I promised to do so, to the utmost of my appraising abilities ; and so we suspended the little chemise from the centre of my bookcase, under a bust of the Apollo.

“ There !” said Mr. Owen, looking rapturously at the little model dress of future perfectibility, “ there it is worthily placed ! Such were the free vestments, that, leaving the limbs of the Greek athlete unrestrained, produced those noble forms, which supplied models for the Apollo of Belvedere.”

“ It is certainly p’aced to great advantage, Mr.

Owen," I replied with a sigh, "but it gives my pretty library very much the look of Rag-fair, or a back parlour in Monmouth-street."

"My dear Madam," he replied, emphatically, "where the human race is to be benefitted, no sacrifice is too great." And this sentiment, which is the governing principle of Mr. Owen's life, may serve for his epigraph.

The little tunic, however, had a great success, and merited the well-known eulogium of Tam O'Shanter to a similar garment—

"Weil loup'd, cutty sark."

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## ODD CONJUNCTIONS.

THE accidents and incidents of travelling sometimes produce very odd conjunctions. When I arrived in Rome, I was in all the first bloom of proscription, brought upon me by my work on France, "*Femme à pendre, livre à brûler*;" and my introduction to the Buonaparte family, set the seal on my transgression in the eyes of their deputed

persecutor, the Comte de Blacas, ambassador of France. Even the secretary's secretary of the representative of his most Christian Majesty, was afraid to turn his diplomatic eyes to the side of the room where I stood, lest he should happen to *se compromettre* in a furtive glance. On the occasion of one of the many splendid parties given by the Countess of C——, by which the hospitality of Ireland was maintained in the ancient capital of the Cæsars, his Excellency the Count de Blacas and myself got so wedged together in the crush at the drawing-room door, that the Italian groom of the chambers, in the breathless haste of his rapid annunciation, cried out *de haute voix*, “*Son Excellence l'Ambassadeur de France, et Lady Morgan.*” “Holy St. Francis! what a *tête-à-tête* was there!” The whole room was in a titter.

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## PRINCESS BORGHESE.

I was seated at breakfast one bright Roman-winter morning with the Princess Borghese, at her villa Paolina, near the Porta Pia, and within view of the ruins of the Prætorian barracks, when letters from the post were brought in. The Princess turned to the Chevalier —, her agent and chamberlain, and requested him to read and answer one of them immediately; adding, “ You know precisely what I ought to say, and will say it better than I can.”—“ The Chevalier,” I said, as he retreated to an adjoining room, “ appears to be an excellent person. It must be a great advantage, in your Highness’s present position, to have so tried an adherent of your family, to assist you with his experience and advice.”

“ *Oui,*” she replied, “ *c'est l'homme du monde le plus respectable.* *C'étoit le Chancelier pour mon*

*Duché, car mon frère ne m'a pas donné de Royaume.”\**

What a trait ! How super-exquisite ; but oh ! for the careless *nonchalante* air with which in the intervals of two sips of chocolate, “ my brother did not give me a kingdom,” was uttered !

“ Do this, and this,  
Take in that kingdom, and enfranchise that.”

I give this dialogue, exactly as it was uttered. A veracious recital of the most ordinary conversation, goes beyond the effort of fiction ; and there is nothing in the doctrine of possibilities, however extravagant, which is not equalled or surpassed by fact.

\* “ Yes, he is the most excellent person in the world. He was the chancellor of my duchy ; for my brother did not give me a kingdom.”

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## THE COUNSELLOR.

I was talking yesterday to a gentleman of the birth, parentage, and education, of Mr. Canning ; all of which have been for ever misrepresented by the political enemies of that eminent man. "He was the grandson," said my informant, "of the well known Counsellor Canning of Garva, who, as an Irishman, of ancient birth, large possessions, and as a member of the Irish legislature, was a person of the very highest consideration."

"Then why do you call him counsellor, as a title of distinction."

"Because in Counsellor Canning's day, it was a distinction. A papist might have a noble descent, a large property, and an historical name, but he could not be a counsellor."

Whatever marked the distinctive privileges of the Protestant ascendancy, was a grade in itself, a dignity guarded by the laws of the land,

and an assurance of personal gentility. Up to the middle of the last century, all the liberal professions were closed against the Catholic gentry of Ireland ; but it was a dignity to belong to the bar, even among protestants ; for the candidate for its honours was obliged to study in London, which at that time was an affair of no inconsiderable enterprize and effort. The uncertain sea voyage, and long land journey, were attended with a heavy expense, some risk, and considerable labour. Wales being then inaccessible to carriages, that part of the journey was made on hired horses ; and not less than three weeks were occasionally passed in the transit from Dublin to London. To be a counsellor, therefore, was in itself the mark of a certain considerable wealth and respectability.

“ Counsellor,” is still prefixed as a title of distinction by the common people, and by all the second-rate Catholics, to the names of barristers ; and even the feudal cognomen of “ *the O’Connell* ” loses nothing by the professional dignity of counsellor, which the Kerry clients of that gentleman, the ex-subjects of his dynasty, never fail to give him.

A short time before the death of Grattan, “our husband and ourself” drove from the house of our old friend General C——, to pay a visit at Tenahinch. We had taken a wrong road, within a mile or two of that beautiful spot ; and we stopped to inquire our way of an old woman, who sat spinning at a cabin door. “ Pray, which is the road to Mr. Grattan’s ? ”

“ Misther Grattan ! Och, sorrow know myself knows, no, in troth, Mar’m.”

“ What ! not know where Tenahinch is ? ”

“ Tinnyhinch, agrah ! Och, it’s the counsellor’s yez are looking for ; well, turn here, just to the right, and any body will tell yez where the counsellor’s is ; just a stone’s throw from the Dargle. Sorrow one in the country but knows the counsellor’s.”

The counsellor, then, was the distinctive epithet by which the poor neighbours of Tenahinch best knew “ the father of his country.” It was the title of his ascendancy ; and power is always uppermost in the Irish mind.

How deeply has the iron of oppression entered into the soul of the Irish nation, and how much

has a long misrule deteriorated the national intellect ; substituting the conventional for the true, and rendering moral dignity and honesty of conduct almost physically impossible. Aristides himself, to say nothing of St. Anthony, could scarcely resist the temptations to corruption which arise from a divided population, and which are unknown in the worst governments of the continent. The protestant ascendancy, from the peer to the coal porter, form the true aristocracy of the land, and all else are serfs. The protestants are in Ireland, what the Normans were in England ; only they have not seen the policy of a social fusion, which the more genial temperament of the French conquerors submitted to, in their intercourse with the Saxons. Oh ! with how many warm Irish hearts and ardent Irish spirits I began life, who have since yielded to the baneful influence of this state of things, and cooled down to a more prudent consideration of their country's wrongs, in relation to their own private interests. Yielding to a paltry and ephemeral ambition, they have looked down from the height of their official dignities upon the romance of patriotism, and condemned the expression of feel-

ings, which it was once their pride to avow. How many who once shared such illusions, have afterwards shunned my sight, lest they should involve their interests in the proscription of one who loved their country, "not wisely but too well." This is one of the severest penalties of life: death itself inflicts none so bitter. The penalties of nature bring their solace in their necessity: but what consoles for the terrible conviction of the frailty, and falling off from principle, of genius and sensibility; for perceiving, ere half our course is run, or, while we are maintaining ourselves a direct course, "steering right onward,"

" Each wave that we danced on at morning, glide from us,  
And leave us at eve on the bleak shore alone."

## RIDICULE.

“ Yes, I am proud—I must be proud to see  
Men, not afraid of God, afraid of me.”

I ENVY Pope the burst of honest triumph that produced these lines !

How long was he lashed, tortured, reviled, calumniated, and misrepresented in character, feeling, religion, person, and in all his ties and all his affections, before the author of Windsor Forest and the Universal Prayer produced his Satires and his Dunciad ! Ridicule is an arm furnished by nature to wit, to defend it against the envy, hatred, and malice of vain, pretending, mediocrity ; and the severity of its blows, has no doubt mainly contributed to the outcry against its legitimacy in the warfare of opinion. Dulness commenced its denunciation, and self-interest set the seal of reprobation upon it, by rendering it penal.

The validity of the legal objection against ridicule, seems to me wholly untenable ; being

founded on one of those “subterfuges,” in which Lord Kames tells us, that “lawyers delight.” The assumption that ridicule is no test of truth, has been received without examination, principally on account of its application to the detection of political and religious error. Notwithstanding the universal dislike to be shewn up, no one has dared directly to question the morality of satire as a corrective of manners, or to object to the poet’s magnificent boast of

“ Safe from the bar, the pulpit, and the throne.  
Yet touched and shamed by ridicule alone.”

In criticism also, ridicule is allowed, notwithstanding the supposed proximity of the sublime to the ridiculous. Even the murderous parody of “Oh ! Jemmy Thomson, Jemmy Thomson, oh !” has escaped the imputation of injustice, and of leading to false conclusions, on the merit of the original. But above all, a great deal of the logic of Euclid consists in the *reductio ad absurdum*, which differs from the ridiculous, only because there is nothing very humorous in the disparity

discoverable in a man's notions concerning angles and lines.

In strictness of speech, there is no test of truth, save the evidence of the senses; but whatever tends to bring our conceptions in comparison with realities, may be so called; and that ridicule may be so applied to this purpose is indisputable. It is indeed the especial merit of ridicule, that it addresses itself to the senses, or at least to those ideas which are the most closely connected with sensitive impressions. The ridicule of persons is purely demonstrative. It is an enumeration of accidents and qualities, more or less exaggerated for the sake of humorous effect, but, for the rest, substantially true, or believed to be so: otherwise the ridicule fails. To tax a man with absurdities of which he is not guilty, is not ridicule, but calumny. Ridicule of opinions can only consist in such a *juxta-position* of ideas, as makes their disparity ludicrously self-evident. That which is consistent and true, cannot be ridiculed.

Ridicule derives its efficacy from the responsive sympathies of the audience addressed. The ridicule of unknown persons excites no emotion. The

ridicule of a known person, for qualities which he notoriously does not possess, is equally impotent. When Hone represented the British constitution by an inverted pyramid, resting on the crown at its apex, and supported by bayonets, the sensible image of instability he presented, found a prompt reflection in the public mind. He advanced, however, no novel statement. If a conviction had not pre-existed in public opinion of “something rotten in the state of Denmark,” his humour would not have told. Had he supported the tottering edifice with a printing press, instead of a bayonet, the misrepresentation would have been rejected with scorn.

Ridicule stands precisely on the same ground as graver arguments, being either the statement of a fact, or an inference drawn from one; and it is liable to the same abuses, and no more. Nothing is more common than for ridicule to address itself to vulgar prejudices; but what is there singular in this? Aristophanes (it is said) assisted in forwarding the judicial murder of Socrates, by personifying in his drama the false notions which were current in Athens respecting that philosopher. But

Melitus and Anitus did precisely the same thing, and were equally successful through the employment of grave discussion; yet no one dreams of proscribing rhetoric and logic, because they were thus employed to make the worse appear the better cause. The common villainy in both cases was the falsehood of the matter objected. Had Socrates really spent his time in the pursuit of childish subtleties, the flea's leap would have been no more than a fair exaggeration, as illustrative as it was pleasant. Just so, had he really corrupted the youth of the city, the sober, serious invective of his public accusers would have been equitable: the fault, in both instances, was not in the form, but in the *fond*.

There is, however, this essential difference in favour of ridicule, that the graver lie might be the entire fabrication of the accuser, and yet produce its effect; wherefore the efficacy of the satire depends altogether on the pre-existing prejudices of the public, which it only illustrates. Ridicule, it is true, may lead to error, by the misapplication of acknowledged truths; as when trifling absurdities are employed to render virtue contemptible. A bishop's

wig is no ornament to the “human face divine,” but it would be eminently unfair to conjure up the ridiculous image, in mockery of the pious individual who may be compelled to adopt the costume; still more unjust would it be, if an inference were drawn against the religious system which flourishes beneath the shadow of that hairy portent. Such false inductions are not, however, less familiar to the most serious argumentations; and they are then, by so much the more dangerous, as the bad reasoning is less obvious to detection.

The general rejection of ridicule in dispute, rests upon the most flimsy of sophisms—the argument from abuse to use. But there are many persons who direct their objections against it in its application to religious subjects, on account of the weight and dignity of the theme.\* This is a frank begging of the question. Dugald Stewart, in speaking of the Provincial Letters of Pascal, observes, that there are some truths in which ridicule is more

\* Disputes on religion are, after all, but disputes upon men’s ideas concerning supernatural objects; and to ridicule what is incongruous in thought, is by no means to ridicule the divine Author of all things—that is impossible.

powerful and convincing than reason. “ ‘The mischievous absurdities,’ he says, “ which it was Pascal’s aim to correct, scarcely admitted the gravity of logical discussion, requiring only the extirpation or the prevention of those early prejudices which choke the growth of common sense and conscience.”† Having, in his quality of a good protestant, a previous conviction or prejudice that the system of the Jesuits was false, Stewart readily admitted that the use of ridicule against it is fair. He would likewise have allowed, in all probability, a joke against Mahomet’s pigeon, or the miracle of his suspended coffin ; but he would not, I suspect, have approved of the ludicrous exaggeration of Voltaire’s drama on David, or have suffered it to pass muster as a proof of the disparity between the facts of that king’s life and his pretensions to the character of the man after God’s own heart. Certain I am, my Lord Chief Justice w<sup>u</sup>ld not let such a work go unpunished. The ideas illustrated in this sarcastic attack, are of the commonest order of moral conceptions; and Voltaire might have thought himself

† First dissertation to the Supplement of the Encyclopædia.

as much justified as Pascal, in “extirpating a prejudice which scarcely required the gravity of logical discussion,” by a ridiculous travestie: the offence then, if offence there be, lies in the mind of the judge, and in his conviction as to what is, or is not, sacred.

But the law in permitting grave discussion, permits the right of judgment on this presumed sacredness. The accused, therefore, cannot in equity be bound to the judge’s prejudice in the matter. If we are permitted to entertain a doubt of the truth of any proposition, we should in reason be allowed to put forth those arguments which we deem most convincing against it; and if we think a proposition beneath the gravity of logical discussion, there is no reason why we should be forced to confine ourselves to that mode of argument. The judge, however, takes the whole point at issue into his own hands. The ideas to be overthrown, he asserts are not early prejudices, not contrary to common sense, and therefore they are too respectable to be confuted in any other way, than in Barbara or in Baralipton. In other words, he declares, that ridicule is a good instrument to ex-

tirpate all errors, except those which he cherishes himself; and that it is available against all the world, but the dogmas which are “ pack and parcel” of his law, and are incontrovertibly established on its authority.

On this point, the Catholics and Protestants would be much at issue. Many a grave Protestant divine has chuckled over Erasmus’s jest concerning the “ real presence” of the horse, he forgot to return to its owner.\*

To a Catholic, convinced of the truth of the doctrine of transubstantiation, it would appear an indecent levity, and misapplied ridicule: “ flat blasphemy.” Why then should this argument be lawful as levelled against transubstantiation, and yet be unfair as applied against the miraculous conception? Simply because he who is the strongest happens to be a Protestant, without being also an Unitarian.

Ridicule is, in reality, a species of argument very peculiarly applicable to test religious dogmas. The propositions which constitute the elements of

\* “ Sic tibi rescribo, de tuo palfrido,  
Crede quod habes et habes.”

a religious faith relate to “things not seen.” There are no sensible types with which to compare them; and it is only by comparing the ideas with each other, and detecting their incongruities, that error can be demonstrated. This is the especial province of ridicule. When Alexander set up for a god, the ludicrous decree of the Lacedemonian senate betrayed the absurdity of his pretensions better than the most studied argument. The ridicule of the pagan theology scattered through the works of Lucian is a perpetual demonstration of the incongruity of abstract propositions, by means of sensible images. Yet persecuting, narrow sectarians have not thought it beneath their dignity to claim this writer as a believer, and to use his arguments against their opponents, though they bitterly execrate Swift and Voltaire for treading in his steps.

It is this peculiar efficacy of ridicule, that has made its use so objectionable to partizans and exclusionists. The happiness of its illustration renders truths popular, which would remain the exclusive property of the learned, as long as the error to which they are opposed was involved in the intricacy of an abstract argument. The sen-

sible image is a stepping-stone to the judgment of those, who, unused to dialectics, cannot thread the labyrinth of involuted ideas. Those who are interested in the credit of any particular doctrine are, in general, ready enough to compound for the dissent of the cultivated few : and they can bear with patience an argument, which, being beyond the calibre of the vulgar, is not likely to make many proselytes : but ridicule, being within the scope of all, brings absurdity home to the conviction of the meanest understanding. This is the secret of that hostility which the law manifests in the midst of its seeming candour, against certain attacks on the establishment. They are intelligible to all the world ; and it is feared that their influence may be proportionate.

Whatever is incongruous and absurd, cannot emanate from a being pre-eminently wise and good. The internal evidence of such incongruity, is decisive against the pretensions of any religious system, in which it exists. Ridicule, therefore, goes to the fountain head of all false pretensions ; and as one religion alone can be a real revelation from Heaven, it follows, that the partisans of all the

others, have an immediate interest in putting down the use of a ready instrument for measuring their several errors. What is the sum of their argument? You may put forth cogent and conclusive reason as long as you please; but beware of ridicule; for that proves nothing. This excess of candour and forbearance is not entitled to the slightest credit. It may, perhaps, be objected, that ridiculous no-proofs will pass current with the lower classes for valid argument. To this I reply, first, that the lower classes are not so innocent and helpless: or if they are, let them be better taught: and secondly, that they are much more frequently the dupes of grave and plausible no-proofs, than of humorous misrepresentation; and that the argument, if good for any thing, goes against all discussion whatever.

The defenders of absurdity and error are not always in the same story: for they always cry out against the argument which happens to press them the most closely. The counsel of Geneva censured Rousseau's gravity in attacking their religious notions; and asserted, in the teeth of the English law-maxim, that, "books, only written

to turn into ridicule, are not, *by a great deal*, so reprehensible, as those which, without stepping on one side, go at once to the attack by dry reasoning.”\* So much for the honesty of state dogmatists!

In advocating the lawfulness of ridicule, it is not necessary to advocate every instance in which it is employed. It is bad taste and buffoonery to put forward ludicrous ideas, out of season; and it is both bad feeling and bad policy, to insult the believer by a profane jest. A man is not, however, to be committed to Newgate on a point of taste, or treated like a felon for not having read the institutes of Quintilian. Those who would thus proscribe ridicule in their opponents, are by no means slow in using it against them. Not only ridicule, but scurrility and invective, are daily lavished against those who are objects of religious rancour. What was reprehensible in Voltaire becomes laudable in Piron; what was wrong in Swift was right in Rennell. A protestant bishop may crack a joke upon two non-ascendant religions with a

\* Lettres érites de la Montagne.

single antithesis ; but woe betide the man who is facetious upon the thirty-nine articles.

Within this sophism the lawyers have entrenched themselves, upon being driven, by public opinion, from an open and barefaced defence of persecution. By its assistance they are still enabled to fine or imprison, any one who presumes to question the truth of law-established dogma. It has taken some centuries to storm the outwork ; how many will it take to capture the citadel !

## LEGISLATIVE LITERATURE.

LORD C—F—N was very amusing to-day : every thing he said was cleverly said ; full of information, and abounding in curious historic anecdote. I observe, that the elders of the English aristocracy have an amazing mass of historical knowledge. History is the mirror of aristocratical *amour-propre*. How I should read history if I were a Howard, or a Stanley, or a Russel ! The

knowledge of history is, besides, a part of the qualifications for an hereditary legislator ; and, of necessity, it engages the attention of those nobles, who are not above, or beneath, all sense of duty and propriety. The mischief of it is, that their tastes and education lead them rather to anecdote, than to philosophy ; and their knowledge consists more in facts, than in deductions. The ecclesiastical education of our English universities is at war with philosophy ; and the great reject all philosophy that is not genteel and within bounds, like Paley's. Dugald Stewart is their *ne plus ultra*. Of physiological philosophy, the philosophy of fact, they are usually ignorant. A single page of De Tracy would scare the whole House of Lords. Though they may very generally read the Heloise, they do not the less reject Rousseau's other works, as too philosophical,—Rousseau, the least philosophical of thinkers, and as vehement a hater of philosophers, as the author of the Metro-maniac himself ! “ If,” said Lord L—, to his old friend, General C—, who wanted him to purchase a duplicate set of Voltaire's works—“ if I were to let your Voltaire into my house, I should

expect the roof to fall and crush me." Another lord, to compare great things with small, actually burned my France, having first called his whole household to witness the solemnity. From the beginning of time this flaming argument has been the favourite *court moyen* with the powers that be. In this they do but follow the natural instinct which leads us to fear whatever we do not understand. Philosophy is, in truth, but a democratical piece of business : it knows nothing of castes and privileges : its object is only the happiness of mankind at large ; and it mounts not to the sublimity of vested rights, the transcendentals of politics. But anecdotes, facts, and dates, the sayings and doings of our ancestors, are so useful, so imposing, so applicable to every thing and to nothing, they are so ornamental in discourse, and they so set off a debate !! What a figure they made in the discussions on the catholic question—the arguments of the E.'s, and the eloquence of the W.'s.

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## VICE REGAL PROGRESSES.

“ Les ambassadeurs envoyés en France par les princes étrangers, faisaient à Paris une entrée pompeuse et solennelle. Cet usage a subsisté jusque vers le milieu du dernier siècle : on ignore pourquoi il a été aboli.”\*

*Dict. des Etiquettes, par M. de Genlis.*

I THINK however one may guess ! The age of pompous and solemn ceremonics, like the age of chivalry, is over, and for ever ; both belonged to times of ignorance and barbarism : and long before the great explosion from the revolutionary crater took place, public opinion and private comfort were undermining that mass of cumbrous forms, which weighed upon the feelings, tastes and enjoyments of the victims whose rank obliged them to submit to their galling infliction. If any now submit to the *gêne* of gorgeous state, it must be in the irremediable dulness which produces the lowest

\* “ Foreign ambassadors formerly made a pompous and solemn entry into Paris. This usage subsisted until the middle of the last age : we know not why it was abolished.”

order of pride, and which is more gratified by figuring in a procession, than in the page of history, to illustrate the records of their country.

The Irish Lord Lieutenants of the olden times were subjected to all the pageantry, privation and display which then distinguished the majesty they represented. From the very starting post of official initiation, they were called on to abandon all the personal ease and independence of private life. They left England, and returned to it, according to certain rules and forms, which it would have been *leze-majesté* to have neglected. The interval of the commonwealth, had caused some of the forms of the vice-regal progress to be forgotten; yet in Charles the Second's time, we find Lord Essex writing to a friend, to find out, if he is to return in the same state with which he departed, and to prepare him a black suit trimmed with black ribbons, to make his grand entry into London; even though he returned in a sort of disgrace. Sir John Perrot's departure for the Lord Deputyship, as described by his quaint biographer, is a scene for a melodrama! He had received the queen's orders to sail with, and command the fleet, sent to inter-

cept the Spanish invaders directed against the Irish coasts, and “to interrupt the King of Spayne, and his Navie.”

“ Then did Sir John Perrot prepare for that voiage, (to Ircland, by Waterford), with all convenient speede. He had with hym fiftie men in orange tawny cloaks,” (think of that, ye *Brunswickers*; a Lord Lieutenant arriving in Ireland with fifty men in orange !!) “ whereof divers were gentlemen of good birth and qualitie. Also he had a *Noyce* of musicians with hym, being his own servants. He was served all in silver plate, with all things else suitable; and soe being royally furnished in all respects, he departed from London, about August, and going from thence, by barge, he had with him divers noblemen and gentlemen, who did accompany hym unto the shippes. As they lay in this barge, against Greenwich, where the Queene kept her court, Sir John Perrot sent one of his gentlemen on shore, with a diamond, in a token unto Mistres Blanche Parry, willing hym to tell her, that a diamond coming unlooked for, did alwais bring goode looke along with it : which the Queene hearing of, sent Sir John Perrot a fair

jewell, hanged by a white cypresse ; signifying withall that as longe as he wore that for her sake, she did believe, with God's healpe, he should have no harme ; which message and jewell Sir John Perrot received joyfully ; and he returned answer to the Queene, that he would weare that for his soveraigne's sake ; and doubted not, with God's favour, to returne her shippes in safetie ; and either to bring the Spaniards if they came in his way, as prisoners, or else to sink them in the sea. Soc as Sir John Perrot passed bye in his barge, the Queen looking out at the window, shaked her fan, and put out her hand towards him; who making a low obeysance, put the scarfe and jewell about his necke, which the queen sent him. Being arrived at Gyllingham, where the queen's shippes rode, Sir John feasted on shipboard such noblemen and gentlemen, as came with him thither."

After enduring every misery and vicissitude, and "storms and contrary winds," that the tyranny and caprice of the elements could inflict, after being obliged to put in by stress of weather, at Falmouth, Plymouth, and "soe sett sea to Ireland, and touched at Baltimore, and Waterford, and therabouts,

upon the Irish coast ;" and having missed the Spanish ships, encountered pirates and chased corsairs " to the Coste of Flaunders," and his ship striking ground on the Kentish Knockes, and being all but lost, the unhappy Lord Deputy found himself, one fine day, driven near Harwich, and so sailed back into the Thames, after a threc months unprosperous voyage.

His second descent upon Ireland, though more successful, was scarcely less tedious. Contrast this vice-regal progress, when the wisdom of our ancestors was wisest, with the progress of a Lord Lieutenant in these degenerate times, when setting aside all precedents, and discarding all time-honoured authorities, the new viceroy steps into his carriage for Ireland, as if he were stepping into his chaise for a visit to Kew, skims along the macadamized roads at ten miles an hour, and mounting his stern-boat, crosses St. George's Channel, without touching at Falmouth, Plymouth, Baltimore, or Waterford ; and instead of finding himself at the end of three months in the mouth of the Thames, is in six hours comfortably seated at dinner in Dublin Castle, in an easy chair, cushioned

with eider or iron, as the innovations of the day, for which our ancestors were wise in vain, may suggest.

I do not defend this levelling principle of accommodation and comfort, that spares so many risks of life, of health, and of time, incurred when men on leaving Dublin for London, made their will, and invoked the prayers of the church in crossing to Park Gate. I do not presume to doubt the superiority of the times, which Madame de Genlis so fondly regrets: I merely state the fact of the vice-regal progress in the older and wiser times, as compared with the same journey at the present epoch, when we have fallen upon evil men who make good roads, and upon evil times, which have produced steam engines, and steam boats, without reference or respect to the immutable order of things established either at, or before 1688.

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## BAD BOOKS.

" Je ferai quelque jour une apologie dans les formes, des plats et mauvais livres. Ils sont sans prix pour un bon esprit."\*

GRIMM, p. 1. T. 3. p. 107.

" Il y a autant d'invention à s'enrichir par un sot livre, qu'il y a de sottise à l'acheter. C'est ignorer le goût du peuple que de ne pas hasarder quelquefois, de grandes fadaises."†

LA BRUYERE.

I HAVE just risen from perusing a tolerably accurate, but dull and unphilosophical censure of our modern literature. No more Miltons, no more Shakspeares, no more Bacons, and Jeremy Taylors !! One might as well lament that there were no more knights-errant and battering rams. Every age knows its own wants, and provides for them ; and Milton would not probably succeed much better, 'were he to reappear in this

\* " Some day, or other, I will make a formal apology for bad books. They are invaluable to a sound thinker."

+ " There is as much invention in making money by a bad book as there is folly in buying it. Not to hazard sometimes great nonsense is to be ignorant of public taste."

nineteenth century, with a new *Paradise Lost*, than the Laureate, Robert Southey, Esq. has done with his *Vision of Judgment*. It must, indeed, be admitted, that if *La Bruyère* is right, our English booksellers are very inventive personages ; for they produce more bad books than the rest of Europe put together. But there is also abundance of excellence afloat—of that precise excellence which society requires ; and as the overflowing fertility of literature has generated a tact, prompt and accurate as an instinct, for discovering what books are to be bought and studied, what may be read, and what cast aside, the putting forth of nonsense and villainy is much less mischievous than is supposed. In fact, a man is drawn by a sort of elective attraction to the works which harmonize with his intellectual peculiarities, assort with his feelings, and dovetail with his wit, just as animals are drawn by nature to their appropriate bodily nourishment ; and the frequency of bad books proves only that fools and knaves now employ their leisure in reading, instead of the more dangerous and brutal pastimes which occupied their predecessors.

This evil of bad books is no novelty. Whoever runs his eye over the catalogue lying on his library table, will be convinced, that in any age, the number of really useful and valuable works bore no very large proportion to the entire mass of literature. Men are apt to imagine, that Ovid, and Virgil, and Horace, had the field to themselves ; but the “mad, melting, reciters of August” were, no doubt, as abundant in their day, as in the silver age of latinity, which so rapidly followed. The unrolling of the manuscripts of Pompeii has proved that “trash” preceded the invention of reviews, and belongs to an elder antiquity than that of “the Row :” and it may be questioned, whether, at the burning of the library at Alexandria, there were an hundred volumes utterly lost to the world, which were not more serviceable as fuel for the baths, than as food for the mind.

The first efforts of the press were expended in disseminating the accumulated errors of a thousand years, which had previously been in the exclusive possession of the few ; and since then, each successive generation has pretty equally divided its time between refuting the mistakes of its pre-

cessors, and popularizing and accrediting others of its own. Ignorance, pedantry, and bad taste, infect the earlier writers, notwithstanding their eloquence and energy. Their alchymy, their astrology, their witchcraft, were scarcely less mischievous, than their false morality and silly politics. Of theology it is dangerous to speak ; but as every one will admit that whatever has been written without the pale of his own narrow sect, is pernicious error ; and as what every body says must be true, the reader may draw his own consequence. Medicine, to this very day, continues a tissue of ill-understood facts, a chaos of false inferences and incongruous systems. The science of law is a nullity ; and each particular code a standing monument of the barbarity and perversity of the species : and as for philosophy, why the less that is said on the subject the better. Of all the works of imagination, with which the press teemed during the last two centuries, how very few live and are read ! History has ever been a record of errors, of party misrepresentation, and of mistaken views, passed through the cullender of the historian's fancy : while, as to essentials, it is the play of Hamlet,

with the part of the Prince of Denmark omitted by particular desire. Each generation, again, has had its harvest of pamphlets, embodying the corrupt interests and false views of the moment, which have fretted their little hour on the stage, and then have been consigned to the trunk-makers, pastry-cooks, and bibliomaniacs.

We are told that literature having become a matter of mercantile speculation, and authorship having acquired much pecuniary value, men are in haste to realize ; so that, among the multitude of competitors, an author dreads to be anticipated ; and hurries his crude thoughts before the public, lest, while he is digesting them, the market should change, and all chance of reward be cut off for ever. But if authors do not now “keep their piece nine years,” something must be attributed also to the quickened movements of intellect : writing, aye, and thinking also, are more easily performed than formerly ; and a work is not always the worse for being thrown off at a heat.

Another cause for the multiplication of flimsy books, is the universality of authorship ; and this fashion for writing is, at least, as good a fashion as

that of driving coaches and beating the watch. When all sorts and conditions of persons publish, all sorts and conditions of persons must read ; and the annual quality of publications, is less an exponent of the talent in the market, than of the *minimum* of wit, sense and utility, beyond which the public will not buy. Let there arise a demand for any species of nonsense and absurdity, and there will be found a corresponding supply.

The last generation ran very much upon literary cobblers and poetic milk-maids. The present goes principally upon lords and honourables ; and low as the “ collective wisdom” may rate in the estimation of some persons, M. P. in a title page, is worth at least an extra hundred pounds. Amateur writing, like amateur fiddling, need not be of the very best. Those who are placed beyond the reach of great interests, have rarely strong passions ; and if they trifle agreeably, they have done all that can reasonably be expected from them. The “ degenerate race to come,” will, perhaps, read nothing but the works of those who put their mark to their MS., who write by deputy, and publish by dictation : or, perhaps, Mr. Babbage, improving on his

calculating machine, will apply it to the purposes of general literature ; and then authors, like coach-horses, may be displaced by steam engines ; and “the trade,” emigrating to Manchester or Birmingham, may send opinions into the market *per sample*, and manufacture doctrines of every shade and pattern, “as bespoke.” For this change we are not wholly unprepared. Already the study is converted into a counting-house ; the ledger has become the true *primum mobile* of intellect ; and the rapid sale of a work is the signal for multiplying it, in all possible varieties, and in all sorts of spurious imitation. To-day, satirical poems are the vogue, to-morrow, *ottava rima* ; the next day, books of the church, and the day after, the lives of demireps of both sexes. The Scotch robber so lately “your only wear,” is now falling into “the sere and yellow leaf ;” and Heaven knows what embryo original is about to start a new idea, for the benefit of the writing community.

Another order of writers, peculiar to our age, are speculating tradesmen, who, treading on the heels of physicians, write books to puff their wares, and make their title page an advertisement of their

shop. Cooks and confectioners recommend the lightness of their pastry by that of their style; and put forward the flavour of their wit, as a specimen of that of their ragouts. Shakspeare speaks of “cutler’s poetry;” but we boast of anthologies of razor-strop manufacturers, venders of lottery tickets, and composers of French wines.

To return, however, from the starting point, where is the vast evil of this teeming multiplicity, and its consequent mediocrity of books? The reviewers have set the fashion of obloquy and vituperation, as if blockheads and dolts were not their best friends, and as necessary to their trade as the evil spirit is said to be to that of the clergy, or thieves and rogues to my Lord Chief Justice. If none but good books appeared, what would become of their essays on “every thing in the world, and all that sort of thing,” which form the “striking article” of their quarterly numbers. Reviewers should know that bad books make good reviews, exactly as “*de mauvais vin on fait de bon vinaigre.*”\* Without the necessary supply, adieu the opportunity for being witty in print, and of

\* “Of bad wine is made good vinegar.”

shewing forth your own superiority, and enlivening the town at the small expence of an author's feelings.

It is something very unreasonable and selfish in the wise and the learned to desire that nothing should be published but what suits themselves. The woollen manufacturer is not restricted to superfine articles, nor the Glasgow weaver to fine muslins. If the whole community must be clothed, even though all cannot afford to dress like gentlemen, by parity of reasoning, the whole should be amused, although all cannot afford to be wits and philosophers. We tolerate the fabrication of Tunbridge toys and glass beads, and boggle about the printing of somniferous essays for aldermen after dinner, of vapid novels for ladies' maids, and of sentimental mysticism for blue-stocking peeresses. It is no more than fair that such persons should be supplied with their favourite articles, and—

“ Porque como las paga el volgo, es justo  
Hablar le en necio, para darle gusto.”\*

LOPEZ DE VEGA.

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• “ And since the vulgar pay for books, 'tis just  
To take some pains to write down to their gust.”

As for the cant of bad books debasing the intellect and corrupting the morals of the public, the fact is quite the other way : it is the public who debase the *littérateur*. None read silly and wicked books, but the silly and the wicked : and the charge is a mere confounding of cause and effect. But, were things otherwise, have not the public their taverns and gaming-houses, under the sanction of the highest authorities ?

Books are, or ought to be, pictures of the human mind ; and if the witty and the wise alone found a reflection of themselves in the productions of the press, the literary world would be as oddly constituted as the political. The virtual representation of the commons would be but a cold type of the general disfranchisement of the reading public. We have no need here of parliamentary returns to prove the fact. No bookseller, who knows what he is about, will have any thing to do with an original thinker, a man of science, a philosopher, or in general with any one whose matter exceeds “ two handsome volumes in octavo.” Such works may be excellent, may confer lasting

benefits on the species, and entitle their authors to immortal fame; but they don't sell; or, at best, they make but a slow return of capital. "*Quis leget hanc?*" Mr. Colburn or Mr. Murray would ask; and the answer comes pat, "*vel duo vel nemo, turpe et miserabile.*" "Sir, let me see you and your works no more."

As an article of trade, we may say of books, that bad is the best. The nauseous absurdities of "cheap and nasty" tract societies, the spawn of delirious fanaticism or canting hypocrisy, "go off" better than the soundest works of a judicious churchman, and infinitely exceed the sale of the most popular political economy.

The human intellect, like the livery of London, must be addressed by its own recorder, and he who writes too deeply for his age, might as well write in a foreign language. If you will but write down to the level of the general understanding, shock no prejudice, startle no man's faith, break no new ground, give none the trouble of thinking, expose no mystery of the human breast, but "amuse the eyes" without "grieving the heart," you will, if not positively as dull as an

oyster, be sure of a third edition, and a place at half the tea-tables of London. The mediocre, the foolish, and the common-place, are the publisher's best customers; and to deprive them of their appropriate reading, would be as politically unjust, as it is economically impolitic. In literature, as in all things, we want a free trade: no embargoes on stupidity, no protecting duties on right opinions. Why should the harmless literature of nations, and the innocent amusement of the mass, be eclipsed or trampled under foot by an arrogant censorship? 'Twere worse than the three-piled sanctity of a judaical sabbath, or the anti-cake-and-ale virtue stolen from the puritans of the great rebellion.

But the evil of restraint would not stop here. The wisest and the best are sometimes glad to take refuge in a bad book, and to find relief from the dulness of their own thoughts in the absurdities of another's. It is a rich literary year that produces three first-rate novels, the supply to a moderate consumer, of barely ten days! How then are the public to get through a long summer's course of watering-places, without the aid of the secondary

Scotch novelists, and the third-rate imitators of Lord N. and Lady C. B.? In the long vacation, the chancellor himself might be reduced to the Minerva press, or be compelled to a second perusal of Almacks. Your hungry reader is not nice, or at worst he eats, like Pistol, his unsavoury leek, and grumbles. In this respect dulness has great privileges. Genius never writes in folio, and if it ventures in quarto, the bulk is as much owing to the publisher, as a dandy's to Stultz's buckram. Besides, there is a metaphysical length in a bad book, valuable to the literary glutton beyond expression. A volume of S.'s polemics is matter for a week, and a surfeit of all desire for reading for a month afterwards. In short, dulness is in literature, what bread is to a good dinner—it prevents the cayenne and *coulis* from palsying the palate, and spoiling the digestion. It is the bitter olive to good port, or a Cheshire cheese in a wine merchant's cellar. Certain philosophers have explained the existence of moral evil, as a necessary point of comparison for relishing the blessings of life; and if so, why may not

bad books be tolerated, as contributing to the delight with which we enjoy the few that are worth reading ?

The same argument applies equally to error. Truth is “ caviare to the general,” and if given undiluted, the scandal would be intolerable. Literature is the food, not the physic of the mind ; and till we see the opulent contented with roots and water, we must allow them the luxury of conventional nonsense. Without literary rogues and false prophets, also, there would be no controversy. Truth and error are too unfairly matched if both must have a fair hearing ; but when one error is pitted against another, the quarrel is “ a very pretty quarrel,” and may afford good sport to the bye-stander. The controversialist puts not up Ajax’s prayer for light ; but, like Æneas, is concealed in his cloud, and lives and triumphs in the friendly darkness.

If it be the great defect of Catholicism that it closes the door against all inquiry, pure and unadulterated truth is equally liable to the imputation. Men are better engaged in bowling down each other’s prejudices, than in not thinking at all.

If error were not recorded in print, it would not be canvassed, and “*on doit savoir gré à ceux qui osent établir les paradoxes. Si la raison reçue se trouve vraie, on a l'avantage de croire par raison, ce qu'on croyait par habitude ; si elle est fausse, on est délivré d'une erreur.*”\* (Condorcet.)

Few, if any books, are so totally worthless as not to contribute sometimes to the reader’s ideas; and what they do not communicate, they may suggest. There are likewise degrees of comparison in absurdity; and as one nail drives out another, a mitigated picce of nonsense is a good cure for that which is more aggravated. One man’s opinion may be true, as it respects another’s, though false to the nature of things. Such opinions are stages on the journey of knowledge; and they may serve the ignorant, though the philosopher despises them.

I have but one more consideration to urge, and that is the value of bad books as an instrument of commerce. What multitudes are supported by the

\* “ We should be thankful to those who dare to broach paradoxes. If the received opinion be the truth, they occasion us the advantage of believing on reason, what before we credited by habit : if it be false, they deliver us from an error.”

mere manufacture ! What type founders, ink makers, painters, engravers, paper makers, and pressmen ! what folders, and stitchers, and distributors, tanners, leather-sellers, and binders, find an industrious and honest subsistence out of the small class of writers alone, who print for their own amusement, and whose circulation extends not beyond the presentation copies ! How many live by “parsons much bemused in beer,” by visitation charges, *libretti* for the opera, proceedings of learned societies, experiences of hypochondriacal old gentlemen, and hysterically evangelical ladies ; religious novels by persons of quality, and novels of high life by persons who live in low ! But enumeration is useless. All the good books in existence would not supply six months’ matter for the London press. It is by the printing of nonsense alone, that booksellers ride in their coaches, that the revenue is supported, and a countless host of sooty artizans maintained in comfort and independence.

I should not feel, therefore, any great qualms of conscience in adding another volume to the mass, even at the risk of its being dull or foolish. A heavy volume is not worse than a heavy visiter,

and the book may be laid down without rudeness ; while the bore must be endured, until “*il s'ennuye nous d'ennuyer.*” If the purchaser finds, too late, that he has bought folly or impertinence, let him put it in handsome binding ; for if gold and frippery will pass such qualities current when incarnated in a coxcomb, they will perhaps do as much for them when embodied in print. At all events the volume will fill a shelf as well as better books ; and this, after a time, becomes the destiny of the gravest authors, in the most select libraries. Not, however, that one should write expressly “*afin d'embobiliner les pauvres gens,*” but with a loyal intent to be as little stale, flat, and unprofitable as possible. Of this, however, authors are unfortunately not always the best judges ; and moreover there is so much danger in the imputation of setting the Thames on fire, that, what between reviewers, attorneys general, and hypocritical readers, they have no great encouragement in putting forth their best wares.

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## DRAWING CHARACTERS.

“ Each cried, that is levell'd at me.”

MOLIERE was accused of putting living characters into his exquisite comedies. The ridicules of society were then so graphic, the Hôtel Rambouillet, the Jesuits, and the Court, all furnished such abundant materials to truth and satire, that the temptation to give to fiction the interest of fact, must have been irresistible. “ *C'est une chose étrange qu'on imprime les gens malgré eux,*”\* observes the immortal author of the “ *Précieuses Ridicules,*” in allusion to the accusations made against him. But Moliere in drawing characters from the particular species and genus, avoided all personal allusion. Nobody's history was told,—nobody's secret was revealed; but his enemies made his fine delineations of life and character, a subject of misrepresentation and persecution, from which

\* “ It is strange that they will print folks without their leave.”

the power of the king only could protect him. It was Louis the XIVth, who sheltered him from the wrath of the Tartuffes, and supplied him, from his own observations, with some of the most striking characters in his works; for kings like to be amused, even at the expense of their dearest friends: and, provided their own characters, and conduct, and measures, are held sacred, for the rest, “*Sauve qui peut.*”

Party spirit, which, from a decree of imperial proscription, to a column in the lowest organ of purchaseable ribaldry, stops at no means of blackening its opponent, frequently avails itself of this instrument for bringing the self-love of the gullible to its side: and the legitimate satire on a prevailing vice or folly, is affixed to some particular individual, presumed to have been “put into the book” of the author, who is to be run down at the expence of truth, honesty, and honour. But between the ruffianism that attacks character for the gratifications of base, vindictive, and sordid passions, and that honest and courageous delineator of the peculiar vices or follies of the day, which comes under the head of what Moliere calls “*La Satire*

*honnête et permise,*" there is the same difference, as between the hired assassin who way-lays and murders for a stated price, and the gallant soldier, who goes forth in the broad day to combat the enemy of public safety and public rights.

## PICTURE FRAMES.

I AM a great amateur of old picture frames. Cardinal Fesch, who is considered, even in Italy, very high up in the scale of the cognoscenti, told me some very curious anecdotes concerning them. I think it was his Eminence who pointed out to me the most interesting frame extant. It enshrines a superb picture by Raphael, of a female saint, (I believe St. Eleanora.) It is in white and gold, exquisitely designed and carved by Benvenuto Cellini, who was sent by Pope Clement the VIIth, with the picture and frame to the great personage on whom the Pope bestowed it!—What a present!—and what persons!—Clement the VIIth!—Raphael!—Cel-

lini!—This Pope Clement was a true Medici, in his passionate love for the arts. In passing to mass every morning, through the beautiful Salon of the Belvidere, he always paused and made an offering at the shrine of its divine Apollo. It was he who employed Fra Giovagnolo Montorsoli, to restore the hand of that unrivalled statue ; and he was wont to converse with the sculptor while he worked. When his ingenious task was finished, Clement made the artist a Canonico.

The oldest frames are I believe the *Cancelli*, so called, from the skreen work which shuts out the choir from the body of the church, and which they imitated. These frames are divided into compartments, (generally into three,) and the pictures are set in each compartment. They are frequently made with doors ; and were used as altarpieces, in private oratories.\*

The great painters of Italy not only drew the designs for their own frames, but occasionally

\* There is one of these cancelli, or altarpieces, at the castle of Malahide, which escaped the religious rapacity of Myles Corbett, to whom Malahide was given by Oliver Cromwell ; the Talbots being then driven into Connaught, the limbo of catholic gentility in Ireland.

worked at them. The goldsmith's art was then in great request; and many eminent painters of the sixteenth century, began life as working goldsmiths. Among these was Francesco Salviati, who had been also a velvet weaver. Some of the finest frames, embossed in silver, and studded with gems, were executed by these artist goldsmiths, who worked at them in the intervals of their more serious occupations: for at that epoch of the triumph of the arts, even the recreations of the artist were sought in the lighter branches of his divine profession. Vasari describes himself, Salviati, and other young artists, as employing their holiday hours in drawing from the best models in Florence; and again re-united in the workshop of the immortal Bacio Bandinelli, where they worked with renovated ambition, and exhaustless zeal; enduring miracles of privation and self-denial, such as it is supposed that the zeal of religion can alone support. At Rome, they continued the same laborious pursuit, animated by the same enthusiasm.\*

\* "E lavoravano con molto profitto, alle cose delle arti; non lasciando ne in palazzo, ne in altra parte di Roma, cosa alcuna notabile, che non disegnassero: e perche, quando il Papa era in palazzo, non potevano cosi stare a disegnare, subito che sua Santità cavalcava,

Not all the academic prizes, royal premiums and public exhibitions, could effect thus much for the arts. Founded by power, these institutions belong to mediocrity : the da Vincis, the Michel Angelos, the Raphaels, were beyond them ! There are designs for picture frames, by the artists who preceded the epoch of academies, more beautiful in their drawing and execution, than any member of the modern academy of Rome could produce. I have the drawing of one now lying on my table, of the greatest possible beauty in design and workmanship. It combines fruit, birds, and flowers, the heads of animals, trophies, masks, and foliage, in the most perfect drawing ; and all so happily blended, as to present nothing incongruous: the perfection of what is called the Arabesque. The art of picture frames fell with all the other arts; wood and plaster of the rudest form, badly gilt, succeeded to the exquisite carving, designs, and precious materials, which were lavished on the frames of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Nothing so paltry, so mean, or tasteless, as the modern frame.

come spesso faceva, entravano, per mezzo d'amici, in dette stanze a disegnare, e vi stavano dalla mattina alla sera, senza mangiare altro che un poco di pane.”

## ARISTOCRACY.

THE notion of an hereditary aristocracy being serviceable to the people by curbing the monarch, is opposed to all fact. The aristocracy is a class constituted, as it were, expressly for servitude. The extravagance of a single individual will lay a noble family for generations at the feet of a minister ; and, if this be wanting, the necessity of providing for younger children, at the public expense, works the same consequence. Tacitus tells us, that on the decline of the republic, the consular, patrician, and equestrian orders, rushed headlong into servitude ; and he adds, “the more illustrious the family, the more corrupt and eager were the individuals.” In Spain, the aristocracy is entirely gangrened and worthless. In France, before and since the revolution, the highest nobility grasped at personal servitude in the household of the monarch. The indirect good this order has

effected in England, may be explained by the homely proverb, that declares the circumstance under which honest men come by their own. Kings granted concessions to the people to oppose them with more effect to the nobility; and the nobility made the people a pretext for opposing the sovereign; but both fought for themselves,—that is, for the power of ruling the state to their own exclusive advantage.

The brightest page in the history of aristocracies, is that which relates the events of the revolution of 1688. Yet, what a tissue of heartless intrigue, corruption, and tergiversation! what underhand correspondencies with the excluded family! what promptitude to overturn the work of their own hands, are displayed in the lives of the great men of that day! Since the revolution, the aristocracy have been the remora of civilization,—a feather-bed between the walls of despotism, and the battery of public opinion. A surplus wheel in the machinery of the state, they would long since have stopped the movements of government, if their subserviency did not adapt them to every impulse from the crown; while, by means of their

representatives in the House of Commons, they modify the proceedings of that body. At the moment in which I write, the influence of the aristocracy, in defeating a liberal ministry, in making the corn laws an affair of their peculiar "order," in opposing a necessary retrenchment of corrupt expenditure, prove to demonstration the futility of the received theory. Should public opinion, however, triumph in the lower house, the aristocracy must submit to reform, or be crushed. An enlightened people, and an anti-national aristocracy, cannot long co-exist.\*

\* That there are many bright personal exceptions, makes nothing against the truth of the general conclusion. Genius and virtue are superior to contingent circumstance ; and the Russells, the Hollands, and the Darnleys, are not to be placed in the common muster-roll of the class to which they belong. The vice, however, is in the system, and not in the individuals, and we daily feel influence even on the liberal and enlightened ; who, when called upon to decide between privilege and the people, are too apt to have their judgments warped by the peculiarity of their position.

## TEMPER.

THERE is a sort of fitful gaiety very peculiar to the ill tempered. I have known the most sullen and morose women light up with bursts of brilliant vivacity, which to me, who was aware of the real state of the atmosphere, loaded as it was with thunder and storm, appeared very awful. It was like the precursive lightnings, which manifest to the eye the density and blackness of the coming desolation.

The secret, the charm, the spell, that “makes to-morrow cheerful as to-day,” is the even, spring-like sunshine of the mind, which, though sometimes veiled by the vapour of a passing melancholy, is still seen, pure and bright, through the shadowy medium. This is worth all the explosions of hysterical gaiety in the world. Between the sadness of sensibility and the gloom of morosity, what a difference ! But the worst of it is, that, in both

instances, the *morale* goes for so little, and the *physique* for so much, that the drop or the drachm more or less, in the prescribed dose, makes the surly gay, and the gay sombre.

“ There are individuals,” says the unrivalled Madame de Staal (Mademoiselle de Launey,) “ whose good and bad humour are equally unbearable.” This was applied to her royal mistress and patroness, the Duchesse de Maine; but it is applicable to half the fine ladies and spoiled children of fashion and fortune, all the world over. There was nothing I dreaded half so much as getting into high favour with Lady —, when she got into high spirits. Her epilepsy of good humour was insupportable; such tyranny of kindness, such vociferation of gaiety! Running up the great stairs of — one day, I came against a friend, who was going down. “ What are you flying from, in such haste?” he asked.

“ From Lady —’s good humour,” said I.

He told my *mot*, and I lost my friend. How often does indiscretion pass for ingratitude! Yet the indiscreet are never ungrateful, for they are uncalculating; and ingratitude, coming from insen-

sibility, cannot act upon impulse. Strong impulses come of strong feelings ; and strong feelings are the source of all that is great and good, not, alas ! of all that is wise : and so end my inferences.

## IGNORANCE.

PYTHAGORAS, we are told, invented the term philosopher, or “lover of wisdom,” because he could not conscientiously assume the appellation of “soph,” or wise man ; and the greatest philosophers, and most knowing, have had the strongest conviction of the uncertainty of science : so that soph and sophism have become terms of contempt. Yet, how obstinate and stiff-necked is the bridling importance of genuine ignorance. How it looks conscious superiority over all ! and gives out its oracular nonsense, and trite dogmas, as if they were the dicta of divine inspiration. “When I ope my lips, let no dog bark.”

“The conceit of knowledge,” says Montaigne,

“is the plague of man.” What, then, is it of women? A self-supposed infallible woman, with her organic feebleness backing her ignorance, is to be feared and shunned a thousand times more than the wit, and the blue-stocking. I tremble in her presence; and, making my best courtesy, get out of her way as fast as I can. Besides, such women have all (God bless the mark!) a natural antipathy to me; and, without vanity, I may say, “*pour cause.*”

## BEAUX OF OLD.

WHAT funny fellows the dandies of the beginning of the last century were! A fine man, then, was like Sir Harry Wildair—“the joy of the playhouse, the life of the park!” Think of one of the fine men of the present day being a joy any where, or the life of any place!

No gentleman, then, walked out (when he did walk, for we find even Squire Western going to visit in a chair,) without a footman after him.

Dependence and ostentation are the characteristics of semi-civilization ! They are also infallible proofs of mediocrity in individuals, in all times and ages.

### METHODISM AND MOLIERE.

“ IT is good to be merry and wise.” It is difficult to be wise and not to be merry. A few years back, when, in Dublin, it was a rage to be “ serious,” some very foolish things took place, which, as they belong to the *Cronique Scandaleuse*, shall find no room here. It was then the fashion to give tea and tract-parties, to the exclusion of gay faces and pleasant conversation. I remember, on the same night Mrs. Fry preached at a party at Mrs. ——’s in Merrion-square, La Porte read out a comedy of Moliere’s at my *soirée* in Kildare-street. We both gave “ *Les Précieuses Ridicules*,” in our several ways; but my guests went away laughing, and hers yawning. *L’un portant l’autre*, mine had the best of it ; and Moliere *versus* Methodism, won the cause.

## THE FLYING-FISH.

NATURALISTS have said that the power of the flying-fish has been given to it for the purpose of avoiding its powerful enemies of the deep. What, then, have the poor herrings done, that they should not fly? for they, too, have their enemies, no less intent upon "swallowing them quick," than Buonaparte was the bishops, who prayed so fervently against the voracious propensities "of the great Leviathan." But this is not the worst of it; for after all, the gift bestowed, (or said to be given) as a special mark of good, on the flying-fish, was only a *mauvaise plaisanterie*: for he no sooner pops his head above water, than he encounters a new enemy, in certain sea-birds, equally Catholic in their fish-eating devotion; which force the wretched victim back to his native element, leaving it only the choice between becoming a constituent portion of a shark or an albatross. This is a dis-

tressing image, and the new-light doctrine is a relief to the fancy, which teaches that the flying-fish launches into the air in pursuit of pleasure, and is led only by an exuberance of temperament to sport in the sunshine, and sparkle in the waters, in all the happy wantonness of a joyous existence.

Who has not felt this buoyancy of spirit, this disposition to fly, when under the strong excitement of health and spirits? “*Portez-vous bien,*” says that true philosopher, St. Evremont, “*voilà à quoi tout doit aboutir.*” “Be well: that is the end to which all things should be directed:” but to this end how many of the elements of life must mingle. It is curious to observe the rapid changes which take place in our existence quite independently of external circumstance,—the light boundings of the spirit, the high beatings of the heart, unassignable to any foreign cause; and then the depressing laboured respiration, and sinking of the soul, though unconscious of a real sorrow. Even our dreams are under the influence of these inexplicable conditions. The aged and the hypochondriac never dream of flying; and even the young and the happy awaken sometimes under the influence

of impressions, more painful to feel than easy to account for.

The temperament of genius is peculiarly susceptible to these alterations of organic elasticity and depression. It is a true flying-fish of moral life, sporting in the sunshine, and shrinking under the cloud. Even philosophy itself takes its colour from the constitution. Optimism is the mere creation of a “pleased alacrity and cheer of mind ;” and the Epicurean is but another word for a man who digests well ; while the Cynic is only to be argued with by calomel. This may appear all very fanciful ; but it has a practical corollary of undoubted certainty ; and that is,—when you feel misanthropy and disgust creeping on you, instead of penning a diatribe against the nature of things, take a long walk. Air and exercise—a flying-fish excursion into the sunshine, are worth a whole army of syllogisms for harmonizing the pulses of thought. Nature is the poet’s true book of reference. It was Shakspeare’s. The *nature* of the French poets, even in their Augustine age, was *Versailles*, and the coterics, literary and gallant, *de la cour et la ville*.

## TOLERATION.

DU CLOS has some admirable things in his excellent memoir of Louis XIV. Here is one:—  
“*Nulle persécution, beaucoup d'indifférence, et d'oubli, c'est la mort de toutes les sectes.*”\*

Madame D'Epinay, in her *Show up Book* of the Church and State society of France, before the Revolution, draws a picture of this author, *peint en charge*. Still he was an admirable writer, and appears to have been an honest man.

\* “No persecution, and plenty of indifference or forgetfulness would be the death of all sects.”

## OLD-FASHIONED FRIENDS.

WHAT a horrible thing it is to be ashamed of one's old friends, merely because they are old-fashioned. The other day some "*English epicures*," topsawyers of London ton, dined with us, when a dropper-in, from Connaught, took a place (left vacant by a late apology). I had dined with my provincial guest many years back, and thought it the greatest possible honour to be asked to his Castle Rackrent. He then appeared to me a very fine person, and his table a very fine table. But, horror of horrors! what were my feelings when, uncovering the *entrée* next him, before the soup was removed, he asked one of the most noted Amphitryons of the day, if he should help him to some of the savories; and when, after calling *bouilli*, bully-beef! *petits-pâtés*, mutton-pies! soup, broth! *crème-au-pistache*, "raspberry crème!" and *fondue*, "*polden!*" he ended by sending back

his glass of ale, not because he “never touched malt,” but, because, as he told the servant, “he preferred his porther out of a *pewther pot*, after the ould fashion.” French cookery has made but slow progress among the “mere Irish,” in the remote provinces; and “the *jug-day*” at Bogmore (far below the original from which it was copied) is still to be found in nearly all its details among the hospitable festivities of the genuine and unmixed descendants of Milesius.

The science of cookery is the science of civilization; and considering the effect which the material, raw or cooked, has upon the digestion, and the digestion on the brain, it is a science of quite as much importance, as any other in the great scale of utility and consideration. When Lord Byron took to vegetable diet, he used to say to one, from whom I had the anecdote, “When you eat beef-steaks, a’n’t you afraid of committing murder?”

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## IRISH BEGGARS.

“*Souhaiter les bonnes fêtes*” was thought provincial and old fashioned, even in the time of Louis the Fourteenth: in Ireland the custom is as fresh as ever. “Many happy Christmas’s, Easters, and Patrick’s days,” is the wish of the lower orders, and particularly of the mendicity of Dublin. The Irish beggars are perpetual calendars of days appointed by the church to be kept holy. The resources of their eloquence are indeed infinite, and their keen sense of the influence of pathos and humour on the feelings, (beyond the power of words or even facts to express,) is among the many proofs of the shrewdness and innate perceptions of the people, even in the very lowest state of human degradation · for what, on the scale of human wretchedness and prostration, is so low as the Irish beggar !

A book might be written on the mendicity of Dublin ; which, like the history of the country,

would be at once tragical and farcical. The prevalence of a religion which makes charity (uncalculated charity, the most mistaken and frequently the most selfish virtue,) a leading dogma, combines with the poverty of the people, to render beggary an *order*, almost as much tolerated and respected in Ireland as in India. Every quarter, and every street of the capital, had, some twenty years back, its established and privileged female beggar; who, known to the great, and maintained by their servants (for services given), was permitted to exercise the immunity of the court fools of old, and to address their superiors on the occasions of their ingress and egress, with a sort of servile familiarity, often seasoned by humour or tinctured by sarcasm. Generally half mad, and always more than half drunk, their folly or their inebriety was deemed an excuse for their impertinence. Lady M—n—rs, descending the steps of her house to get into her carriage, was addressed by a well known beggar of her neighbourhood in the usual tone of supplication.

“ Go away,” said her ladyship, “ I will give you nothing.”

" Och ! then long life to your ladyship ; and it's often you gave us that, God bless you !" was the reply, in the same tone of imploring misery, as the charity was asked.

The beggar, who frequents Kildare-street, loitering about the portico of its club house, at two or three in the morning, observed the Rev. Mr. —— reel forth, and, before she could lend him her assistance, find his level in the kennel. In that state herself, in which " ladies wish to be who love their " glass, and unable to extricate the reverend gentleman, who—

" All inspired lay beside a sink,  
And to mere mortals seemed a priest in drink,"

she sat herself in the mud beside him, and began to "*keen*" over him thus :

" Jemmy ——, Jemmy —— ; there you lie, machrée, this blessed morning in the gutter, an honour to your cloth and calling ; and where are yez ali, now, that has'nt left the likes of yez behind, only the Reverend Jemmy in the gutter here. God be wid yez, Denis Bowes ! and Charley Ornesby ! and rest your souls ! for it's

little the likes of you, now, we'll see again!"  
Thus sung the modern Bragela!

"The mighty are dispersed at Temora! there is none in Cormac's hall. Bragela will not hope for your return. She has the arms of him who is no more."

This sort of apostrophe to old friendships or connexions, is a very common art in the eloquence of Irish mendicity: to awaken your feelings, to seize on your imagination by a sudden reference to some friend, once the daily visitant of your house, or known partizan of your opinions, is a mode of influence frequently resorted to. It was so the other day in my own instance, and by the very Bragela of the Rev. Jemmy.

"Ye have nothing for me the day, my lady? Well, sure you won't be so, plaze God; and God be with poor Counsellor B—.\* He took the *could*

\* The deceased friend here alluded to, partook largely of the wit and intellect of a family, to whose members, male and female, it is the fashion in Ireland to apply "*l'esprit de Mortimer*," as a distinction. It is saying nothing, to say of Mr. B—, that he was one of the few surviving conservators of the peculiar wit, humour, and national information which once distinguished "*the order of gentlemen*" in Ireland! I not only lost in him "*mon meilleur*

(cold) out of my heart and gave me charity on the steps of this very door : and its little the likes of him will ever darken your threshhold, lady dear, again, any how—rest his sowl ! Well, success to Hamilton Rowan, and Counsellor Shiel. Shure there's life in a muscle, and luck before us yet.—Hurrah for ould Ireland !”

Old friends gone for ever ! with Shiel and Hamilton Rowan and ould Ireland ! These were well worth the trifle they extorted : and, thus invoked, patriotism “gave, ere charity began !”

*causeur*,” as Madame de Villette said on losing her friend Champfort, but one to whose judgment on all that was characteristically Irish, I could always refer with confidence, and by whose approbation I was always flattered and assured.

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## OBSOLETISMS.

“Words that wise Raleigh and sage Bacon spake.”

THE late Bishop of Ossory (Dr. Kearney), so distinguished by his literary attainments, who, though a bishop, was not ashamed to express his enthusiastic admiration of Shakspeare, frequently told me, that he thought the best commentators on that immortal genius would be found in the upper gallery of an Irish theatre. How many words, that have puzzled the learned for the last century, could find a ready explanation among the catholic gentry, and even lower orders in Connaught and Munster ! Language in Ireland stopped short, with every other improvement, at the revolution ; and the penal statutes had an equal effect on the liberties and the philology of the people.

Speaking of Anthony (in *Anthony and Cleopatra*), Philo says,

“ His captain’s heart,  
Which in the scuffles of great fight hath burst  
The bucklers on his breast, reneges all temper.”

The word “*renege*,” a poser to the English reader, is used nightly at every catholic card table in the Irish provinces; where at the old fashioned Irish game of five and forty, an old lady “*reneges*” a card (imprudently played) by the licence of the game. In Queen Elizabeth’s time every one wrote *hir* for *her*; in Ireland it is still pronounced so. Not a phrase, not an idiom, is now in use among the common Irish down to the lowest classes, that may not be found in the most classic authors of Elizabeth’s and James the first’s day.

“*Plaze your honour*,” an address of courtesy now confined to the Irish spalpeen or cottier, after having passed through the hands of the upper servants and tradesmen of fifty years back, was once an address of respect from lord keepers to lord chamberlains, and from noble to noble, down to the time of Charles the First. The Earl of Middlesex begins all his letters to the Duke of Buckingham (James the First’s favourite) with “*My most honoured Lord*.” Lord Chancellor Bacon addresses with “*If it may please your lordship*,” and even in colloquial familiarity, “*your honour*” was a phrase of courtesy, addressed to both sexes.

But obsoletisms are constantly mistaken for vulgarisms. In as much, indeed, as they are exploded forms, which have fallen to the exclusive use of the vulgar, they are so: for the vulgar of all ages are those who stand still, and make no progress either in language or in its source, ideas. The vulgar tongue, is the tongue spoken by the people. Dante and Petrarch were said to write in the vulgar tongue; it is now erudition to be able to read and understand them.

To begin letters with a long, formal, and ceremonious address, was the fashion in England up to the time of Charles the Second, whose court introduced the more refined simplicity of French forms and manners. “Right honourable!” “My singular good lord!” “My right worthy!” and “May it please your grace,” “honour,” “worship,” or “lordship,” were all swept away with stiff stays and cumbrous fardingales; and the letters from “yours, faithfully, Charles Rex,” to Harry Bennet, on the serious subject of Courants, Sarabands, and “small fiddlers that do not play ill on the fiddle,” exhibit a very different formula, from the letters of the discreet and well affected

persons of quality of the preceding reign. They, in fact, have all the ease, familiarity, and equality of the charming letters of the Sévigné's, Coulanges, and De Retz, if not their wit, elegance, or good taste.

I have frequently observed, in the late Marquis of A—— and many of his noble contemporaries, a tendency to pronounce after the old manner, as “*hull*,” for whole; “*merchant*,” for merchant; “*chency*,” for china; “*showlder*,” for shoulder; “*buzzoms*,” for bosoms, &c.; and this pronunciation answers to the orthography of the great lords and ladies of Whitehall after the restoration, who being “*un peu brouillés avec l'alphabet*,” endeavoured to spell as near to the sounds of words as they could. The Duchess of Cleveland, writing to the king, says, “*I never was so surprised in my hulle life*,” &c. &c &c. Jonathan Wild quizzes the ordinary of Newgate for falling into this jacobite pronunciation, by spelling *whole*, *hull*.

Many forms of courtesy, rites of hospitality, and traits of habits, manners, and customs, to be found in the old comedies, from the time of Elizabeth to Anne, are still observable in the remote

parts of Ireland ; a country which, like an old coffer in the country mansion of an old fashioned family, is the exchequer of all the odds and ends and relics of modes long passed, and exploded in modern life.

I remember, in my childhood, dining at the country house of an old catholic family, where, after the chaplain had pronounced an interminable grace, the lady of the mansion rose, and bowing round graciously to her company, pronounced, “much good may it do ye,” which was always followed, at the end of the dinner, by the observation that none of her guests had eaten any thing ; indicating the delicacy of their appetites, and the unworthiness of her table.

A few months back, having stopped to change horses at a road-side inn, and the horses having to be sent for to the field, we alighted, and found the family at dinner in the reception room, which was also the kitchen. A wretched man, begging his way to Dublin, half-naked, and half starved, and so faint from want, cold, and exhaustion, as to be scarcely articulate, paused at the threshold, and moving the crown of a leafless hat, said, “ Much good may it do ye, genteels !” This form of

courtesy, in practice among the gentry not many years back, has now fallen to the very lowest classes of society ; and this is the history of manners, as well as of phraseology. In Shakspere's time the salutation of the modern Irish beggar to the peasant, was deemed a trait of royal courtesy.

The modern house-maid, who accompanies her lover, the footman, to the upper gallery, flushes at the coarseness of the fine ladies of Wycherley, Vanbrugh, and Farquhar ; and feels her own superiority in modesty and gentility to the lovely Lady Lurewell, or even to the prudent Angelica of Sir Harry Wildair.

Tales, novels, and dramas, are the true sources from which the philosophy of manners can best be drawn, and are illustrative of the progress of society at various and successive epochs. History does nothing in this respect ; and modern historians, in this point of view, are infinitely less valuable and useful, than the dryest chronicler of the middle ages. A page of Froissart is worth a volume of Hume, (who, as an historian, by the by, is daily losing ground in public estimation). The literary fiction, which gives cotemporary manners, modes,

and prevailing phraseology, has a fair chance of surviving the tale which, placed in a remote epoch, creates a manner and a dialect neither illustrative of the times of which it treats, nor the times in which it is written. This is the fault of the beautiful romance of Ivanhoe, which is written with all the colouring and dialect of Queen Elizabeth's day, copied, even to set idioms and phrases, from Shakspeare and the play-writers of his time.

English was not spoken in the time of King John ; the people spoke Saxon, the upper classes Norman-French. When Shakspeare wrote his play of King John, he did not affect to go back to the style and language of Henry the Fifth, because he could not employ that which was in use when his scene was supposed to take place. He therefore wrote in the language of his own times ; and among the many admirable qualities of his inspired authorship, not the least admirable is, that he has given in his dramas, the very tone, accent, idioms, and manner of colloquial communication, from the court to the peasant's hut.

To know how exactly Shakspeare has copied ex-

isting forms, and to account for the rapidity with which he wrote, it is only necessary to read some of the memoirs and chronicles of Henry the Eighth's and Elizabeth's day, where dialogues on every state affair, carried on by ministers, secretaries, and Irish Lords Lieutenant, are given verbatim,—all ready to go upon the stage, and to pass for a scene of Shakspeare's or Ben Jonson's,—just as a group at the Hague or Cologne, still exhibits a high toned picture of Vandervelt or Rembrandt.

I open at random a volume from the shelf of the book-case of the dressing-room in which I write, and copy literally a scene and dialogue, meant only to be a simple narrative. It is taken from Campion's *Historie of Ireland*, written 1571;—the scene is a room at court,—several lords sitting in commission on Gerald Fitzgerald, Earle of Kildare, “a gentleman valiant and well spoken, yet in his latter time overtaken with vehement suspicion of sundrie treasons.” The Cardinal Chancellor Wolsey is his inveterate enemy and chief accuser. It requires no great effort of imagination to conceive the place and persons of this veracious drama.

The gloomy gothic chamber, the ponderous costume of the lords, many of whom have been made familiar to posterity by the pencil of Vandyke, the sober splendour of Wolsey's habit, his scarlet hat, and glittering crucifix, the picturesque habit, and more picturesque person of the Geraldine,—his gigantic form, and stern, bold bearing, waiting in indignant silence for the accusations to be made against him, by a powerful and interested enemy. After a solemn pause, the lords “being diversly affectioned,” the Cardinal Chancellor broke forth in these words :

“ I wot well, my lord, that I am not the meetest man at this board to charge you with these treasons ; because it hath pleased some of your pew-felows to report that I am a professed enemy of the Geraldines. I must have leave, notwithstanding your stale slander, to be the mouth of these honourable persons at this time, and to trumpe your treasons in your way, howsoever you take me.

“ First, You remember how the lewde Earle, your kinsman, who passeth not whom he serve, might he change his master, sent his confederates with letters of credence to Francis the French king

How many letters?—what precepts?—what threats have been sent you to apprehend him?—and yet not done; why so?—Forsooth, I could not catch him. Nay, nay, Earle, forsooth you would not nighly watch him. If he be justly suspected, why are you partial in so great a charge? If not, why are you fearful to have him tryed? Surely, this juggling and false play little became either an honest man called to such honour, or a nobleman put in such trust. Had you lossed but a cow or a garron of your owne, two hundred kyrneggis (kirns) would have come at your whistle, to rescue the prey from the uttermost edge of Ulster. All the Irish in Ireland must have given you way. But in persuing so weighty a matter as this, merciful God, how nice, how dangerous, how wayward have you bin? I wis, my lord, there be shrewde bogges in the borders, for the Earle of Kildare to fear."

Whilst the Cardinal was speaking, the Earl chafed and changed colour, and sundry proffers made to answer every sentence as it came. At last he broke out, and interrupted them thus—

" My Lord Chancellor,—I beseech you pardon

me. I am short witted, and you, I perceive, intend a long tale. If you proceede in this order, half my purgation wil be loste for lack of carryage. I have no schoole tricks, nor art of memory: except you hear me, while I remember your words, your second process will hammer out the former. What my cousin Desmond hath compassed, as I know not, so I beshrew his naked heart for holding out so long. Cannot the Earle of Desmond shift, but I must be of counsell?—Cannot hee bee hid, except I winke?—If hee bee close, am I his mate?—If hee bee friended, am I a traytour? This is a doughty kind of accusation which they urge against me, wherin they are stabled and mirde, at my first deniall. ‘ You would not see him,’ say they ;—‘ who made them so familiar with mine eyesight?—As touching my kingdom, my lord, I would that you and I had exchanged kingdoms, but for one moneth, I wo: ld trust to gather up more crummes in that space than twice the revenues of my poor earldomie. But you are well and warm, and so hold you; and upbraide not me with such an odious storme. I sleep in a cabin, when you lie soft on a bed of downe. I serve under the cope of heaven,

when you are served under a canopy. I drink water out of a scull, when you drinke out of golden cuppes. My courser is trained to the field, when your jennet is taught to amble. When you are begraced, and belorded, and crouched and kneeled unto, then I find small grace with our Irish borderers, except I cut them off by the knees.'"

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## A CHARACTER.

MR. —— is that sort of man, who has all the faults that help to please, and forbid to serve. His character is a study; his great talent is his power of assimilation. He is never displaced, never out of keeping with times, persons, or circumstances. He dovetails with all opinions and all orders of intellect—a perfect Aristippus. He is like mustard-seed: fling him where you will, he takes root on the surface and flourishes. Sow him in a hot-bed, in a flannel cap, in a lady's beau-pot, or in a potatoe ridge, *c'est égal.*

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## THE DÉLAISSE.

THE most dissipated man, who has once known the distinction of being loved by a woman capable of the intense devotedness which springs from passionate feelings and strong intellect, must feel a dreadful void when he is loved no longer. Deserting, or deserted, he will feel it with remorse, or with mortification. The passing fancy of the light and the foolish leaves no scar behind; the wound closes rapidly, and all is forgotten.

## TAVERNS.

“ You may be wise in your study in the morning,” (says brow-beating Johnson, to his gape-mouthed admirer Boswell,) “ and gay in company at a tavern in the evening.” What a trait of manners ! Fancy a man of fashion, or a man of letters, or any man, in the rank of a gentleman, setting

forth after dinner, to be “ gay at a tavern in an evening.”

The tavern life has now fallen to the lowest classes of society. In the time of Charles, and James the Second, princes of the blood, and the proudest of the peerage, frequented the tavern. In Louis the Fourteenth’s day, men of fashion resorted to places of the same description in France; and ladies of rank, by way of a frolic, sometimes accompanied them to some fashionable auberge in the suburbs, or the Boulevards. In another half century, there will be nothing between the common chop-house, and a magnificent club—between Crockford’s, and “the cheap and nasty.” The improvements of social and domestic life are filling up the intervals. The improvements in female education are also giving a charm to home, which it wanted in those times, when the women were treated as slaves or sultanas in one class; and were deemed in others creatures only fit .

“ To suckle fools and chronicle small beer.”

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## SOLEMN BLOCKHEADS.

“Eh ! qui ne connoit pas la gravite des mots.”

CHENIER.

LAST night I met Mr. —— at Lord A——’s. What a solemn blockhead ! Unluckily for him, he has precisely that sort of learning, which draws out fools from their obscurity, and drives them from the secure asylum of their insignificance, to a public exhibition of their inefficiency. Still, such men get on ! and, under the present system, make their way to place, and power, and endowment.

For the last twenty years, there was scarcely an instance of a man of very superior genius, or of great intellectual strength, being employed in the public offices of the greatest nation of the earth. A few shrewd, acute clerks worked their way into the subordinate places in the state ; but the moment they were found to be too shrewd for their masters, they were got rid of.

There is nothing so fearful as a nation becoming more enlightened than its government. Of such elements was the French revolution composed.

## CATHOLIC PETITIONS.

THE earliest petition I know of, on behalf of the Roman Catholics is that addressed to James the First, beginning, “ Most Puissant Prince, and Orient Monarch !” In this petition the sufferers class their persecutors as being Protestants, Puritans, and atheists, or politicians : a meddler in polities, in the days of the absolute Stuarts, was set down as an atheist.

## LAUGHING AND CRYING.

THIS morning, in describing a scene of distress I had witnessed a few days back, the tears dropped fast from M——’s eyes ; and yet I know few firmer intellects ; but the finest metals dissolve the easiest. It is extremely difficult to draw tears from blockheads, except when muddled ; and then they

talk of themselves, and are pathetic. It is easier to make “butchers weep,” than to move the self-sufficient coxcomb who is wrapt up exclusively in his own importance, to the exclusion of all human sympathy. But, after all, I doubt if the gift of laughing heartily be not an equal proof of feeling. Alas ! for those who neither laugh nor weep ! and doubly alas ! for those who are obliged to live with them ! There is an immense variety and character in laughs. I have often heard it said of the Countess of C——, that her laugh is even more beautiful than her face. One could write chapters upon this subject ; and perhaps I shall do so some of these days, even at the risk of being laughed at for my pedantry, for there really are a great many odd things to be said on the subject. Somebody has written a catalogue of persons who died laughing.

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## EXPECTATION.

IT is pleasant to expect ; at least it is so in youth, when temperament and inexperience combine to paint life *en bœuf*. Expectation is hope coloured by fancy. It is a proof of abundant vitality ; and even when disappointment falls over it, like a shadow, it is still worth its purchase.

“ Ah ! que ne puis-je encore l'attendre,  
Dût-il encore ne pas venir.”\*

This is perfectly in nature. The old seldom expect. It is among the terrible inflictions of age, when humanity loses so many of its attributes, that the heart sends forth none of those shoots of expectation which fill up the intervals of actual enjoyment. The sap is dried, and the trunk is shrivelled—shrunk in its dimensions, and seared on its surface ; and the branch, and the flower, and the fruit have withered and dropped. “ The spring

\* “ Alas ! why cannot I still expect him, even though he should not come.”

shall return with its blossoms ; but of me not a leaf shall arise," says Ossian. Alas for the beauty, the truth, and the sadness of this image !

### THE DEVOTEE.

UNDER the old regime in France, the first symptom of a woman's intending to "give herself to God" (*se donner à Dieu*, as the phrase ran) was her giving up rouge ; so that paint and piety became inseparably connected in the minds of the demi-saints, and demireps, of the profligate reign of Louis XIV. "La Princesse d'Harcourt," says Madame de Coulanges, in one of her letters, "has appeared at court, without rouge. This is a circumstance which, for the present, absorbs every other : one may add, that it is a great sacrifice."

This outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace, this toilette baptism of regeneration, is not peculiar to Catholics. The sacrifice of rouge is but the grey gown and little bonnet of an English Methodist ; and the rigorous proscription of gay

colours of the Protestant sectarian is but the counterpart of what appears so ridiculous in the French penitent, "*qui se jette dans la dévotion*,"—who gives herself up to Heaven when nobody else will have her. On this subject, Madame du Deffand, the blind and aged enamorata of Horace Walpole, is singularly pleasant. When she was young and pretty, and the enamorata of the President d'Hainault, she took a sudden fit of devotion; and her director stipulated for the usual sacrifices. Fasts, prayers, &c. &c. were promised at the first word; but when it came to love, and the toilette, she cut him short at once, with "*pour ce qui est du rouge, et du président, je ne leur ferai pas l'honneur de les quitter.*"\*

\* "As for the rouge and the president, I shall not give them the honors of a rupture."

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## HELEN MARIA WILLIAMS.

"WE dined at Mr. H.'s," says Bozzy, in his delightful book of twaddle, which has proved such an evidence of the world's love of idle gossip—"We dined at Mr. H.'s (Dr. Johnson and myself), and Mr. H. expected Miss Helen Maria Williams. He gave her Ode on Peace to Dr. Johnson; and when this amiable, elegant, and accomplished young lady entered, he (Dr. J.) took her hand in the most courteous manner, and repeated the finest stanza of her poem. He complained of ill health, and said to Miss Williams, 'I am very ill, when you are near me; what should I be if you were at a distance?'"

Young, amiable, elegant, and a poetess! Sylphs, nymphs, and muses, how ye glided before me when, at sixteen, I read this passage in a green arbour at B—— Castle! Then, to think of Dr. Cerberus growling gallantries: hearts of stone! what were your callosity under the influence of Helen

Maria's eyes ! I immediately wrote an ode to Helen Maria Williams, with all the rhymes borrowed from Pope's Essay on Man, and all the spirit from Anna Matilda's Farewell to Della Crusca (my constant study). My ode was quite as good as the poetry of rhyming young ladies of sixteen generally is. There was not an original thought in it ; but then there were such pretty sounding words ! and it began, too, I remember, with " Oh ! thou." I was most desirous to send my ode to Miss Williams without knowing any thing of her " whereabouts," partly for her sake, and very much for my own ; for I really thought the composition Sapphic, and when my volume of poems was published immediately after, (my *début* in authorship, of which nobody ever heard,) I was no less anxious to print it. But I did not. Still, however, my imagination was full of its fair subject, of whom I only knew what Bozzy had told me ; and the lapse of time which had intervened since he wrote, never suggested itself.

I was then in the commencement of my intimacy with Mrs. Le Fanu, the presiding priestess of the muses in Dublin ; and I wrote to her on the sub-

ject, and received the following pleasant and sensible letter, which I have just tossed out of my portfolio, and which has brought the long forgotten subject to my recollection, in all its original freshness. The whole letter is so fair a specimen of the style of the literary ladies of the old school, so like the charming conversation of the writer, and so good a lesson to young ladies who write odes, and who read and write sentimental novels, (besides its coming from a Sheridan,) that I will transcribe it at large.

“Imagine to yourself, *ma belle amie*, how very gay I must feel, when I tell you I have had a confinement of near five weeks. I caught a feverish cold and sore throat, and, at the end of a fortnight, supposing myself in a manner well, I went out to take the air, or rather the damp, (for nothing else was to be had;) and I came home with rheumatic pains, first in my lungs, which removed to my right shoulder and arm, which confined me to my bed, where I was as agreeably as St. Laurence on his gridiron. Thank God I am better, and hope revives, though the season be cheerless; but every

day brings us nearer the spring, and as Madame de Sévigné observes, no one stops short in the midst of a month, or a bad road, for want of power to get through it. So *vive la patience*, best friend in sickness or sorrow. You recollect, no doubt, Mason's beautiful personification of it, in Elfrida. ' Patience here, her meek hands folded on her modest breast, in mute submission lifts the adoring eye, even to the storm that wrecks her.' The following is (I think) no bad invocation to the temperate goddess :—

' Oh ! Patience, heavenly power, hear !  
Be ever to thy suppliant near,  
Nor let one murmur rise ;  
Since still some mighty joys are given,  
Dear to her soul, the gift of heaven,  
The sweet domestic ties.'

You are precisely at the age ; you are exactly of the character of mind to admire more the splendid than the useful virtues. They ever attract and still deceive. How many have lulled themselves into perfect self-satisfaction upon the strength of quick feelings, tender emotions, and easily excited sympathies, who have never practised the every-day qualities that come perpetually into play, and

are essential to human happiness. Good humour, according to Johnson's definition, endurance of the follies and absurdities of others, appear qualities of such easy attainment, that they are neglected as vulgar. What a mistake—how fatal in its consequences! Talents extort admiration ; but genuine and habitual affectionate feelings alone beget love. Well has Rousseau insisted so much upon the '*cœur aimant*' of Julie. I know two women, both highly gifted, the one of very striking and generally admired talents, the other possessing taste and powers of conversation in a very high degree, yet neither of them can boast the possession of one friend even in their own families. For, 'proud with opinion of superior merit,' it tinctures their manners, it renders even their condescension offensive. And à propos to remarkable women, Helen Maria Williams's history is briefly as follows : —I believe it is many years since she first came forward as a literary character. The novel of Julia was, I think, her first publication : it has merit, but certainly a very bad tendency—some of the poetry in it is, I think, very beautiful. She was soon known to Dr. Johnson and other literary cha-

racters. She was at that time not more than twenty. The year after the French revolution, she was in Paris, and was present at a meeting of the National Assembly, of which she gives a very lively picture. In Paris she met a Mr. Stone, a married man; but with a noble disdain of every opinion we are bound by the laws of God and man to respect, she chose this gentleman for her companion in a tour to Switzerland. Perhaps you will think me harsh in my judgment, but certainly a woman possessing those talents that necessarily imply strong and delicate feelings, more justly incurs blame than another, when she sacrifices to passion the respectability of her character, and voluntarily incurs contempt when she might command respect and admiration. She becomes useless when she might highly benefit her fellow-creatures.\*

\* It is not without much pain that I revive the memory of circumstances, which ought to lie buried in the tomb of the eminent lady to whom they relate. There is nothing so certain, as that morality varies with times and places; and that to censure conduct without reference to the age and nation of the individual, is substantial injustice. Helen Maria Williams came into life at a moment when the malignant influence of bad institutions on hap-

"As I have not been out, I gave your two commissions to Tom. Archer has not yet received the English edition of St. Clair. He also called at Power's music shop, who lays the fault upon Stevenson that Castle Hyde has not yet come out. He has had it, I know not what time, to put basses to it.

"I have just been reading St. Clair for the third time, and was more pleased with it than at first, but I think the hero and heroine very dangerous people. You will tell me that the catastrophe would prevent any mischief arising from the witchery of such characters. I do not think so, for we all know that people are not punished in this world because they are vicious ; and (as Horatio has it) 'to be good' is not always 'to be happy.' Moralists lead you into errors, and often throw you into despair, when they tell you so ; for if you

piness, and the prevailing hypocrisy of the times, had rendered every moral principle problematical, and, like her highly gifted cotemporary, the author of the Rights of Woman, she fell into the common error of supposing, that whatever is opposed to wrong must be right. But, though the individual should not be hastily condemned, the interests of the younger part of my own sex require that the error should be signalized. Female purity is indispensable to social happiness. It is one of nature's own laws ; and is never violated with impunity.

are good to the best of your lights and means, and the events of your life are disastrous, you will certainly not feel *happy*, though you may be resigned ; and you will then, like Burgher's Leonora, either be tempted to arraign Providence, or reject altogether doctrines, of which you have found the fallacy."

'Time passed : and it became my turn to receive odes from young ladies in the country, beginning "Oh thou," quite as good and as poetical as my own. Yet oh ! how many successive idols of admiration had my fancy erected in the interval. There was Miss Edgeworth, and Madame de Staël, and Madame Cottin, and Miss Baillie, and a long *et cetera* of literary females, to each and all of whom I felt the sincerest gratitude for the amusement and instruction they afforded me, though I did not write them odes to tell them so.

On my arrival in Paris in 1816, I found that I also had my *petit bout de réputation*, such as it was ; that my letters of recommendation were letters of supererogation, and that I had nothing to do, but sit quiet (no very easy task by the by for

me), and to see and receive all that was best worth seeing and receiving in France. On looking over a list of visitors, one day, presented by Pierre, the porter of the Hôtel d'Orléans, I read the immortal name of Humboldt, and under it, Helen Maria Williams, Rue de Bondi. A visit from Humboldt was always an epoch ; and a visit from Helen Maria, the amiable and elegant, the subject of my first ode, was no vulgar event. I made my inquiries as to the present position of the admired of Dr. Johnson, and the adored of Bozzy ; and learned that for the last quarter of a century she had lived in literary retirement, in the neighbourhood of the Sévignés, and the Ninons ; that she was much beloved and esteemed, surrounded by a circle of sober, sedate, literary friends, and much *liée* with the enlightened Protestant party in France, and their excellent chief, who (with the name of the protestant Pope, given him by Napoleon) was respectable and influential with all parties. I immediately returned her visit, wrote my name at her door, and shortly after received an invitation to a *soirée*, which I accepted.

I happened to be asked, for this very same evening, to a ball at Lord H——k's ; and was accord-

ingly obliged to go to Miss Williams's sober and learned party in all the *tulle* and tiffany of a *robe purée*. We were ushered into just such a room as that, in which one might suppose Mad. du Deffand received her coterie. A few wax lights dimly discovered its gloomy vastness; and "in the haze of distance," a row of large, dark bonnets, was visible, which, on a nearer approach, obviously gave shelter to as many intelligent, but not very blooming countenances. Small groups of men recalling the *hommes de lettres* of old France, were scattered, in earnest conversation; and tea and refreshments were serving round by a servant, who looked as wise, and literary as the rest of the party.

My celebrated hostess rose to receive me from her ponderous chair, which formed the centre of her circle, with as much graciousness and cordiality as can well be conceived. Every look was a welcome, every word an eulogium, and every tone as musical and as modulated as the most fastidious ear could desire. But oh! Sylphs, nymphs, and Muses, and you, bright image of my youthful dreams, young, elegant, and amiable, Helen Maria Williams, did I at last find you in the bulky, formless, and faded

old lady, who now stood before me ! Although I ought to have expected this, I was not prepared for it. In spite of Mrs. Le Fanu's letters, written years before, I had not got a step farther than Bozzy's description : and when the high bred Miss Williams handed me, with true French ceremony, to the *bergère* at her right, and thus incorporated me with the learned ladies of her society, it required some minutes to recover from the shock of my disappointment. My frippery appearance, too, was such an anomaly in this demure and sober circle. What I would have given for a *douillette bien ouatée*, or a coal-box bonnet to cover my bare head ; (the identical head with which I had appeared at Lady Cork's a few years before, and which I have worn for divers reasons of convenience and economy, down to this very winter, 1828, when I find it more decent, though not quite so economical, to shelter it under the shade of a hat or a *beret*, *afin de prendre mon parti*). Let me add, that it is easier to take arms against twenty Popes, and Emperors of Austria, and stand the attacks of fifty Quarrelies, with the new reinforcement of Mr. L—— to boot, than to stare the

first symptom of a furrow in the face, and announce such an epoch without shrinking: thus then I fairly announce myself to be no longer what the *Journal des Débats* once so pleasantly, called me, “*Cette jeune dame, qui a été jeune si long-tems.*”\*

As neither wit, learning, nor age, exempts a French woman from the interests of the toilette, (and Madame Dacier herself was, I have no doubt, a *petite maîtresse*,) we had scarcely warmed into intimacy over the subject of Madame de Staël’s new work on the Revolution (which, by the by, drew forth some very entertaining and characteristic anecdotes of that lady’s recent residence in Paris, and her admiration for the Emperor of Russia, and the Duke of Wellington), when one of the ladies complimented me on my dress; it was said to be *à la rigueur*, for the season, and supposed to be from the fabrique of Le Roi. When I said that I made all my own dresses myself, exclamations from all sides poured in! Did ever any body make a dress, that did not serve her time to the mysteries of the craft;

\* “That young lady who has been so long young.”

but, above all, a literary lady—an authoress—a *femme savante*, working at the needle! I soon set them right as to my learning, by the assurance, that, except a very little bog Latin picked up from a hedge schoolmaster in the wilds of Ireland, I knew nothing of any learning whatever; that my authorship had originated in dire necessity; that being obliged to read and write books for many hours per day, I never talked of them; and that above all, "*Mon métier à moi, c'était d'être femme;*" and so the conversation took a very *enjouée* turn.

The amiable protestant Pope, and others of the gentlemen, enlarged our circle; and the hours passed away so lightly, that it was late when I left the dim rooms and clever circle of Helen Maria Williams, for the splendid and brilliant salon of our ex-Irish lady lieutenant, in the Faubourg St. Honoré, (by the by, one of the few vice-queens who have left behind them an indelible remembrance of virtues, that threw a lustre upon her high position, and of accomplishments that render it the fashion to be gifted, even in that land, where talent is but another word for proscription!) I cannot better close these recollec-

tions of my acquaintance with Miss Williams, than by giving one, or two, of the many notes with which she honoured me, as being extremely illustrative of a certain pretty tone of *cajolerie*, which always flattered its object, without degrading the writer. “*Vous me flattez, coquin, mais n'importe ; flattez toujours.*”\*

“ What poetical fictions did I indulge myself in, when I believed all Lady Morgan’s kind promises, repeated with all her graces and enchantments, of returning soon to the *Rue de Bondi*. I feel quite disposed to *bouler*; and yet Lady Morgan can instantly make her peace with me, by consenting to come with Sir Charles on Sunday next. I shall be extremely flattered, if I am not refused. *Milles tendres complimens.*

“ H. M. WILLIAMS.”

“ *Thursday, Rue de Bondi.*”

“ Miss H. M. Williams, lest she should not be so fortunate as to find Lady Morgan at home,

\* “ You flatter me; but no matter, always flatter.”

writes this note to express her regret, and almost even to *complain* that her ladyship has only found time to bestow upon her one transient visit, since her arrival at Paris. Lady Morgan is not one of those passing travellers, whom having seen once, one can easily be resigned to see no more. H. M. W. is therefore extremely flattered to hear from her friend Mr. Warden, that Lady Morgan had expressed something like a kind purpose of returning. Will she do H. M. W. the honour of passing an hour with her on Sunday evening next, with Sir Charles, to whom she begs her particular compliments. H. M. W. wishes it the more, as she expects a friend on Sunday, who has the greatest desire to be presented to Lady Morgan, whom he has long admired at a distance."

"*Friday, July 5th, Rue de Bondi.*"

Oh ! dear ! I am ready to *pamer* over this allusion to my "graces and enchantments," after being called an Irish she wolf, in Blackwood's, and indexed in the Quarterly for "my unwomanly brutality." Since I wrote the above, in great *gaieté de cœur*, I received a letter from a mutual friend of

Miss Williams and myself, inclosing the following paragraph from a French paper.

“ DEATH OF HELEN MARIA WILLIAMS.

“ We ought to devote a few lines to the memory of a literary lady, whose name is dear to the friends of public liberty. Mrs. Helen Maria Williams, the author of a vast number of political and poetical works, lately died at Paris, after a long illness. This lady left England for France, to assist in the important events of the Revolution. Since 1790, she has constantly resided at Paris. She contracted an intimate acquaintance with the most ardent and most disinterested patriots. She was the friend of Madame Roland, and the Girondins. Since that period, she has related the different events of our Revolution in a series of works published at London, and which have served to direct the opinion of England and the United States to the facts of the French Revolution. To these literary claims, she joined qualities of mind equally affectionate and intelligent. She was always the patron of the poor; and frequently, in the class of unfortunate literary men, her kindness was ex-

tended to that independent merit, which is ashamed to solicit. She published her '*Souvenirs de la Révolution*', the analysis of which was suppressed by the Censorship. The last wishes of this distinguished woman were in favour of the heroes who overcame barbarity at Navarin. Her death has plunged her family and numerous friends in the bitterest grief."—*Constitutionnel*.

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### NO POPERY.

THE Duchess of Marlborough, when ill of an ague, refused to take the cinchona, because it was called at that time, jesuit's bark. The clergy at the reformation were wiser, inasmuch as they did not refuse to take the papistical tithes : for all the rest, our no-popery legislators are pretty much on an intellectual par with poor Sarah.

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## MARTINUS SCRIBLERUS.

THE comparison of logic to matrimony, one of the most diverting passages in Martinus Scriblerus, is copied from the *Nuptiae Peripateticæ* of Caspar Burlæus.

## EXERCISE.

“ WHEN I consider the physical structure of man,” said Frederick the Great, “ it appears to me, as if nature had formed us rather to be postilions, than sedentary men of letters.” There is some exaggeration in this. We hear a good deal of the diseases of literary men, because literary men are most interested in their own afflictions; and they hold the pen in their own hands; but the diseases peculiar to excessive exertion are not less numerous, nor severe, than those of excessive repose. Besides, half the so called desk diseases

arise from the combination of excessive nourishment, with sedentary habits. Like all other machines, the human frame wears out the most rapidly, in those parts, where there is the greatest friction and strain. Continued exercise of the brain is very exhausting, and occasions a demand for nourishment and for stimulation, greater than is consonant with health. Most literary men are *tant soit peu gourmands*; and they pay the penalty of their indulgence the more, because they neglect a regular and gentle exercise. That nature did not intend us for postilions, is evident in the abridged lives, and diseased, deformed, and premature old age of the working population.

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### BOMBAZEEN.

THIS article of dress should be written bombycine. It is a texture of worsted and of silk, the latter substance being the produce of the animal termed bombyx.

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## LAW.

TRUTH is the last object of legal research. Under most arbitrary governments, the law seems calculated to condemn the innocent : so anxious are the lawgivers to prevent the escape of the guilty. The English criminal procedure appears as directly aimed at screening offenders, under a false notion of protecting the innocent. Which is the most mischievous, it would be difficult to determine. The great object of investigating the truth, at once protects the public, and the lawful interests of individuals ; while the business of the advocate is professedly to serve his client to the uttermost, and to lay aside all considerations of justice in his favour. In this he far exceeds the egotism of the parties themselves, who, if they pleaded their own cause, would be checked in their misrepresentations and quibbles, by some sense of shame, by some fear of the prejudice which detected falsehood would excite against them. Whereas the lawyer glories in his

sophistical ingenuity ; and if baffled in his effort, bears the whole blame for the bad spirit in which he has acted. Thus it happens most frequently that we do not try the accused, but the indictment; the overt act is lost in the accidents ; the innocent are acquitted without the re-establishment of character, and the guilty are let loose, to renew their aggressions on society. Yet the law is the perfection of human reason !!

## RICHES.

LA Bruyère observes, “*Il se croit des talens et de l'esprit ; il est riche.*” This is the counter error to that of men of merit who complain that they have not attained wealth. The acquisition of large fortunes, in as far as it is not altogether a matter of accident, requires the exercise of far other faculties than wit and intellect : and it would be as reasonable to complain that this species of merit will not ensure health, as that it will not procure money.

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## TRUTH.

THE love which most men have for truth, arises from the desire to make their own falsehood available. If falsehood were general in society, no man would be believed, and deceit would be impossible. It was a keen remark, that Fielding has, I believe, placed in the mouth of Jonathan Wild, that a lie is too precious a thing to be wasted. Truth is the first interest of society ; more harm is done by falsehood in an hour, than by violence in a year : yet have all nations paid dearly for establishments, calculated for the express purpose of confining inquiry in one exclusive direction, and shutting out all other avenues of light but their own.

## WOMAN'S LOVE.

WHAT a gift, or rather what a fatal necessity is the temperament which leads to the living out of one's self, and becoming bound up in the existence of another, over whose will, passions, and conduct, one has no controul ! This faculty of devotedness is, I suspect, peculiar to females. It is quite possible that a woman, to whom honour and reputation are dearer than life, should risk them a thousand times for the man she loves (particularly if he be her husband), to save his life and honour. The attachment of a man, however strong and tender, would not reach this. We women love the person beyond all abstract principle ; and the error (for it is an error in morals) is seated in the organization which makes us wives and mothers. Men love principles, and even prejudices, more than the persons they love best ; that is, they love themselves

best of all, and love themselves in that point of honour on which the world's opinion depends.

“ I could not love thee, dear, so well,  
Loved I not honour more.”

Ah ! this “ *honour more !* ”

Every woman has not the “ *œur aimant* ” of Julie : women of gallantry never,—coquettes and prudes rarely. Still, woman may be defined a loving animal, and *tant pis pour elle*.

## MALTHUS.

COBBETT and the Irish reformers look with detestation on Malthus and his doctrines : and many “ right thinking ” persons, as they call themselves, fancy that they have discovered a valuable ally in him. The same error is common to both. If Malthus’s position be true, (and no naturalist can doubt it,) it follows as a matter of demonstration, that there is a greater necessity for political freedom.

The greater the obstacles nature opposes to man's comfortable existence, the greater efforts are required to overcome them, and the greater is the necessity that all his powers should be developed to the uttermost. Hitherto the animal has been fully equal to the task of self-subsistence, wherever bad governments have not interfered with the natural distribution of the products of industry, and quartered noble indigence upon plebeian activity. Civilization confers an increased power over the elements, and a corresponding facility in manufacturing food; but unjust governments weigh down the labourer, and avail themselves of every improvement to increase the lion's share of the product. Malthus, properly understood, is a powerful radical reformer.

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## PATERNAL BENEDICTIONS.

MADAME DE GENLIS regrets the abandonment of the nightly ceremony of paternal benedictions (*Dict. des Etiquettes*). The mere repetition, however, must destroy any efficacy it might be supposed to possess, in forcing good conduct. A benediction is at first valued as a reward of virtue, or a symbol of pardon for repented error: but it inevitably becomes a thing of course; and is desired for its own sake alone, or as a pledge of the favourable prepossession of a doating old man who has something to leave.

If a benediction be supposed to possess efficacy in procuring good to its object, so also must a curse be potent in evil; and by the prevalence of this notion, the delirious ravings of disappointed ambition may become the cause of misery to the innocent. Thus considered, the benediction enters into the category of spells and enchantments; and the formulary once recited, the omnipotence of

heaven is enchain'd to the performance of its conditions. This is a most degrading superstition ; and, like all similar errors, it cannot in the long run be serviceable to the species. Its obvious ill effect is to make the will of others, and not the morality of things, the standard of action.

## SENTIMENT.

SENTIMENT is at best an invention of vanity to mask the infirmities of mind and body : no wonder that it so easily lapses into affectation. Joseph Surface is but a cynical display of what passes in the mind of the great majority of the species ; and of what the hypocrite is as anxious to hide from himself as from the rest of the world. Marriage is the grave of sentimentality ; because the parties are like Cicero's Augurs ; they cannot carry on the farce, and keep their countenance.

## PRESENTS.

THE great are fond of presents ; but they are superlatively ungrateful. Little people, in their need of protection, instinctively apply to the great, with a bribe in their hand : and they do so wisely. Flattered self-love yields what justice or benevolence alone might deny. It is, however, by a succession of trifling gifts that the experienced toad-eater makes way with a patron. Women (*par parenthèse*) enter into the details of toad-eating much better than men.

An ignoramus offers something valuable, something above his means to afford ; and he “ takes nothing by the motion ;” for neither money, nor money’s worth is valued by those whose wants are supplied as soon as they arise. Such persons receive without compunction or consideration ; and are neither obliged, nor disposed to return in kind. It is courtesy, and not pecuniary value they want ; and

it enters not into their conception that the value, which is nothing to them, may be an inconvenient sacrifice to the donor. Valuable presents must be rare ; while it is unceasing homage that wins. The spooneys alone are taken in, and strive to astonish by the splendour of their gifts. The “able-bodied” toadies “win with honest trifles to betray to deepest consequences.”

Kings, however, like substantial presents ; but they will take anything, even from the poorest of their subjects. When Georg<sup>o</sup> the Third went to return thanksgivings at St. Paul’s, on the recovery of his health, a picture was made by Dayes of the ceremony in the interior of the church. This picture was bought by an engraver, and a print executed from it ; and an application was made for the king’s permission to dedicate the work to him. The permission was graciously granted by that patron of the arts ; with a stipulation that the original picture should be consigned to himself : a proposition with which the spirited engraver refused to comply.

Courtiers laud the liberality of kings ; and, in the eyes of poets laureate, regal munificence is the first

of virtues: but a present-taking king is less mischievous than he, whom a silly vanity and ignorance of the value of money, betrays into wasting the treasure which is not his own. Besides, a greedy monarch is further excusable, inasmuch as the cupidity of those who surround him, may be supposed to give an intelligible lesson: he has only to profit by the example.

## PER CONTRA.

If the great are fond of presents, the little make their gifts in the same spirit, in which the farmer commits the seed to the earth. M——, in reading Lucian this morning at breakfast, hit upon this curious question: whether, on occasion of some general assembly of the gods, 'the divinities should take precedence according to the respective value of their materials, as images, or according to the merit of their sculpture. The more weighty consideration very properly carried the day; for the

gods, both of this world and the other, are honoured only as they have something to bestow. The reverence for mere wealth, which is the besetting sin of the English character, is a sad mark of moral degradation; but it is at least wiser than a stupid admiration of the oppressors and destroyers of mankind, or an adoration of titles, ribbons, and the accident of noble birth. It is a mistake to suppose that the homage paid to riches is an homage to the folly or roguery of the possessor: it is to his merit and utility as a conduit pipe, for distributing that, of which every one is desirous, that the worship is offered. The honors paid to mere aristocracy are like a pompous inscription over a dry pump; compared with which, Rothschildolatry is a return to simple nature.

## EDUCATION.

THE great error of all systems of education is, that they are systems ;—schemes built upon moral theories, instead of developments of physiological facts ; they are the result of a neglect of elements which are indestructible, in the attempt to establish doctrines which are hypothetical. Even Pestalozzi's system has this radical defect. His doctrine of “*la foi et l'amour*,” which he has taken for its basis, or “that which children feel for their parents,” is to me unintelligible ; for schoolmasters are not, and cannot be, parents ; and his rejection of emulation, as a germ of dangerous passions,\* is utterly unphilosophical. Until Nature ceases to give passions, man must use them. The lever of all action is motive

\* He calls<sup>o</sup> ambition “*la queue de Bonaparte.*”

## TEMPERAMENT.

ALL character, and much of conduct, is a mere affair of temperament. Early association will do something in forming opinions; precepts may modify, and example influence; but nothing will give sensibility, where nature has denied it. Something may be effected by the friend or the physician; and caution and calomel may tell, in the long run. Nero, perhaps, might have been bled down to a maudlin methodist; but returning health would have raised him to the zeal of a St. Dominick; and on a perfect convalescence, he would have ceased to cant, and began to burn. In General Count P. de Ségur's beautiful work, in which the story of a campaign is given, with all the charm of a romance, and all the dignity of an epic, the author accounts for the Russian war, and the headlong precipitation with which it was conducted, on the simple principle of a latent malady

"in the world's great master," which sharpened his passions, and urged him to his ruin; "an acrid humour which reigned in his blood, which he considered as the cause of his irascibility, but without which," said Napoleon himself, "there is no gaining battles." "Which of us," adds the author, "has penetrated sufficiently into the human organization to affirm, that this hidden vice was not one of the causes of that restless activity, which hurried on events, and occasioned at once his grandeur and his fall?"

How these French soldiers write! Bred in the "tented field," where have they acquired the style so finely fitted to their subject, and the philosophy that belongs to their age? Who are the historians of the last thirty years, of the greatest events that ever shook the governments of the earth to their centre?—not the "*hommes de lettres*" of France,—not her *académiciens*,—nor her ex-ministers and statesmen, "*rompus et corrompus*,"—nor her professed authors;—they are the gallant soldiers who witnessed the events they so eloquently describe, and who call on cotemporary testimony to corroborate their statements. Ségur,

Rovigo, Foi, Rapp, Dumas, Montholon, De Rocca, &c. &c.—these are the historiographers of modern France, and well worth Racine, and all the other bland and laudatory chroniclers of church and state, who wrote under the *surveillance* of the Maintenons, the Montespans, and their complaisant ministers, or influential valets and *femmes de chambre*.

### INFANT BAPTISM.

MANY suppose that the practice of infant baptism is derived from a Hebrew rite; but the oriental christians, by whom baptism was first adopted, confined that ceremony to adults. It seems probable that the modern usage was introduced into the western church, in imitation of the illustration of the Romans; a ceremony performed, according to Macrobius, on the ninth day after birth with males, and on the eighth with females.\*

\* *Saturnalia*, I. 16.

## LOGIC OF FINE WRITERS.

"Chateaubriand, speaking of the variety and extent of modern discoveries, observes "Le Génie de l'homme est véritablement trop grand pour sa petite habitation ; il faut en conclure qu'il est destiné à une plus haute demeure."<sup>\*</sup>

*Voyage en Italie et en Amérique.*

THIS is a good specimen of the logic of "fine writing," "plenty of eloquence, and little wisdom." What a sweeping conclusion from one little word (*trop*)! Man is *too* great for this world, and therefore he belongs to another! Never was an oratorical exaggeration worse applied. Amidst all the magnificent results of human ingenuity, which have thus powerfully excited the susceptible imagination of the French academician, want, and disease, and ignorance, are still the especial characteristics of the species. No where are the essentials of good government generally understood; still less so the art of maintaining public liberty, when once ac-

\* "The genius of man is too great for his little habitation ; we must, then, conclude that he is destined to a more elevated existence."

quired. No where is morality independent of the executioner,—no where is life maintained by the great bulk of the community at a less expence, than that of constant unremitting labour. Look at that half-starved moving mass of rags, by courtesy called an Irish peasant; reflect upon his helpless incapacity, his physical destitution, his moral annihilation! Yet is he the subject of an empire, in which all the powers of the species are carried to the highest point of development, to which man has ever reached. Might we not equally conclude, from this spectacle, that the human animal is so ill adapted to his mundane existence, that he must be intended for another? Stripped of all exaggeration, the adaptation of our intellectual powers to our necessities, though exceedingly imperfect, is still abundantly sufficient to carry conviction, that the earth is the sojourn of man's especial destiny: whether, with Chateaubriand, we are to jump to a conclusion, and say, "*therefore* he is destined to no other," I leave to the consideration of those who have no better argument for determining their faith.

## PHILOSOPHY.

“Donner à l'oubli le passé,  
 Le présent à l'indifférence,  
 Et, pour vivre débarrassé,  
 L'avenir à la Providence.”\*

WHAT excellent advice, if it were in every one's power to adopt it: but the colour of a man's philosophy is, after all, no more at his own disposal, than the colour of his eyebrows. Both depend upon the same cause, the temperament of the subject. The stoics and the epicureans have been thought to differ only in words; and, as far as mere reason is concerned, an accurate definition would force agreement between them. But till the stoic can be cured of his bile, and his habitually uneasy sensations, or the constitutional in-

\* “Give the past to oblivion, the present to indifference; and, to live exempt from all care, leave the future to Providence.”

dolence of the epicurean can be broken down by disease and misfortunes, a real unity of sentiment is impossible. There is nothing, concerning which a man is more positive than his own sensations : and these determine the point of view from which every one regards the nature of things. The same landscape is before us all : but we see it through Claude Lorraine glasses—one man *couleur de rose*, another *du plus beau noir* : and then we fall to quarrel, like the knights, concerning the gold and silver shield ! It is nearly the same thing with religion.

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## CORREGIO AND JOHANNA OF PLACENTIA.

WHEN I was at Parma (1820) the cognoscenti of the place were still talking of the wonderful discovery of the “*piu insigne pitture*” of the great Antonio Allegri detto il Corregio, which, after the lapse of nearly three centuries, had been found to exist in the monastery of St. Paul, belonging to the Benedictine sisters. The authenticity of the paintings, and the certainty of their immortal author, were questions long set at rest. But nothing grows old in Italy, and every thing in which the arts are concerned serves as a thesis of disputation, to those ardent but suppressed minds, to which all subjects of discussion are forbidden, save such as have no intimate connexion with human interests and human happiness. While the empty shops and silent streets of Parma exhibit the hopeless and torpid uncertainty of its pauper inhabi-

tants (a city once the mart of bustling commerce), it is not unusual to see learned disputants holding forth, with great zeal and energy, on the merits of some rival "*maestro*," or disputing the date or authenticity of some picture of Mazzuolo, or Correggio, as if the emancipation of wretched Italy, from the Austrian tyranny, depended upon the settling of the question.

I was one morning whiling away a listless half-hour, previous to our departure, in the noble church of San Giovanni Evangelista, from whose aisles the fume of the morning service was not yet dispersed, when I was attracted by the loud voices (loud for such a place) of two persons, who were arguing with violent gesticulations before the splendid picture of St. Paul destroying the statue of Diana of Ephesus. The one was in a laical dress, but covered with the dust of the closet; there was no mistaking him; he was evidently a professor of *virtù*. The other was in the monkish habit of St. Benedict. The virtuoso seemed anxious to prove that Diana of Ephesus was a certain Giovanna di Piacenza, abbess of the neighbouring convent of Benedictines, two cen-

turies back, and the patroness of Corregio's early efforts. The other (the monk) was denying the allegory insinuated by the lay virtuoso — that Jane of Placentia had been persecuted for her too liberal spirit, or that the mysterious fresco, discovered in the long closed chamber of the neighbouring convent, could have been painted as a fit subject for the chaste nuns of St. Paul, and their holy mother to gaze on. The apartment so painted, he insisted, had originally made a part of the palace of a Parmesan noble,—and, with other neighbouring houses, had been gradually annexed to the monastery, during the last century, when the community had become too numerous for the original building.

I could not stop to hear the argument out, as we were on the point of starting for Bologna, and our carriage was literally in waiting. But I left the porch of San Giovanni Evangelista with my imagination so full of Giovanna of Piacenza, abbess of the monastery of St. Paul, of whom the lay virtuoso had let drop some curious anecdotes, that long before we had reached Modena, I had made her character and patronage of the arts, the

subject of an Italian romance; giving it all the colouring of the scenery through which I was passing—and taking down particulars, features, and sites between Parma and Reggio (the birth-place of her immortal protégé), which, in my veteran knowledge of novel writing, I knew would *work up* well.

At Bologna, where we remained much longer than we intended, and where we lived much with the learned and the ingenious, I could only learn of my interesting abbess, that she was a “*grande dame de par l'église*;” but the forty languages of Mezzofanti, and the profound erudition of the excellent Costa, could tell me nothing more. Santa Caterina, too, was just then beginning to roll her eyes in the church of “Our Ladies of St. Catherine,” at Bologna; and she so occupied public attention, that it was impossible to extort a word on the subject of any other saint in the calendar. Still, as often as I sat listening to Crescentini singing his delicious cavatina, in the frescoed *salone* of the beautiful Martinetti, the idea of my Jane of Placentia came upon my mind; for whatever I have best conceived (and even medio-

crity has its degree of excellence); whatever I have written most successfully, has all been done under the influence of music; the whole of Salvator Rosa was composed (and composed *à trait de plume*) in my drawing-room, in Dublin, while listening to the master-compositions of Rossini.

It was at Florence I first obtained more precise information concerning my charming abbess; for charming I was determined she should be. During our delightful residence in that pleasantest of all Italian cities, I had the good fortune to make the acquaintance of Signior Giuseppe Michali, whose very erudite work, "*L'Italia avanti il dominio dei Romani*," is a monument of learned industry. The true Italian feeling of this gentleman had led him to devote his time and attention not only to the subjects connected with the ancient glories of the country, but to whatever illustrates those divine arts of which it is the mother. At the very time of my making his acquaintance, he was occupied with the subject that had got hold of my imagination; and his account of the long-concealed and celebrated abbess is as follows:—

A vague tradition that there existed, in the mo-

nastery of the Benedictine sisters, at Parma, a chamber painted in fresco, by the immortal Corregio, had got gradually into public circulation. At first it was deemed to be nothing more than the malicious gossip of some neighbouring convents, which represented the fresco as a most unholy exhibition, reflecting on the memory of a certain abbess, who flourished in the sixteenth century, and whose history had been traditionally preserved in the district over which she had exercised considerable sway. The fresco chamber had remained shut up for nearly two hundred and eighty years : or, if open to the nuns, its splendid pictures were but ill appreciated by the victims of bigotry, whose suppressed sensibility left them incapable or unwilling to receive those fine impressions which the works of genius are sure to impart to the cultivated and tasteful.

By degrees, however, this painted chamber began to excite the attention of the curious ; and, at an epoch when the works of Corregio had reached their highest estimation, the celebrated Mengs, with some difficulty, obtained permission to visit the interior of the convent, a

sanctuary usually closed against “unblessed soles.” In 1780, he published a letter on the subject, declaring the frescoes to be amongst those *capi d'opera* of Corregio which had secured his immortality. To this opinion Antonio Bresciani, professor in the academy of Parma, and Batti, of Geneva, who had obtained a similar permission, bore ample testimony. But when the posthumous works of Mengs appeared, all reference to the frescoes was omitted in the pages devoted to an analysis of the works of the painter of the Graces.

The world of *virtù* was again thrown into a vortex of doubt; and one must have lived in Italy, and seen how bad institutions can confine the mind to trivial subjects, to understand the commotion into which a whole community can be thrown by such a doubt.

Tiraboschi came forward on behalf of Corregio, to claim those splendid works, (of which the Italian public heard so much and had seen so little) as new triumphs of his genius. He endeavoured to reconcile the silence of Mengs with the declarations of Bresciani and Batti, by supposing that the former had not spoken of the frescoes, because he

had found them in a state of decay and partial obliteration. Signior Michali, with more probability, supposes that the silence of Mengs arose from the melancholy event of his death, which occurred immediately on his return from Parma to Rome, and which might have prevented those additions to his simple notices of the frescoes of St. Paul, which would have set the question at rest. But the question, so important to half the academicians and all the virtuosi of Italy, was not set at rest until the summer of 1795, when a commission of four artists of eminence was formed to visit the convent, with permission of the order, and to examine the frescoes, and pronounce a judgment by which the world of taste was resolved to abide.

From the judgment of the commission of artists there was no appeal—the frescoes were assigned to Corregio. But their subjects—the most profane though eminently classical subjects,—who had chosen them? Vasari declared that Corregio had never studied at Rome—that he was ignorant of the sublime models furnished by the genius of antiquity! and that the humble and unfortunate

disciple of the dry school of the rude Mantegna, drew his first and only inspiration from the sight of that work of Raphael, which extorted the celebrated exclamation of "*E sono pittore anche io!*" Still the works of Albano are not more classical, more poetically ideal, and more purely modelled on the antique, than those frescoes painted by Corregio in his early youth, which were doomed to the oblivion of two hundred and eighty years. There is one of the subjects, more particularly, which appeared to have been more freshly drawn, from the pages of Homer. It represents a female suspended by a cord, her arms tied above her head, and two anvils of gold hung from her feet. This was the punishment inflicted by Jupiter on Juno in the presence of all the gods.

It was thought that some *arrière pensée* lurked in this representation of the summary punishment inflicted by the old church of the antique world upon its refractory daughters, and that it was meant to hit on the severity with which the rebellious mothers of the Christian church, the powerful abbesses of the fifteenth century, were occasionally treated by the Jupiter of the Vatican. All the subjects of these

pictures, indeed, were so at variance with those usually selected by Corregio, or deemed admissible into such holy retreats as the convent of St. Paul's, that the whole appeared an inexplicable mystery. The laborious efforts of Italian *virtù*, however, at last discovered that the inspirer of the young and ardent Corregio was Giovanna of Piacenza, whose early encouragement and direction of a genius vainly struggling against penury, identified her name with the history of the arts, and probably gave to Italy the most brilliant of her artists.

At the period alluded to, the abbesses of the great and highly endowed Italian monasteries were powerful princesses of the church, commensurate in wealth and influence with the great lords of the conclave themselves. Chosen for life, they not only administered the immense revenues of their convent uncontrolled, but lived with a splendour and luxury, which occasionally degenerated into absolute licentiousness and boundless extravagance. The spiritual authority with which they were endowed, the jurisdiction they possessed over the persons submitted to their rule, extending even to

life and death, the many privileges they received during the fifteenth and sixteenth century, enabled them to take part in all the political factions and civil feuds of the day, and to decide the most important contests ; though, like true women, they often attached themselves to the least powerful party, and abandoned the magnificence of their convent to share the exile of their friends and partizans. Enjoying the greatest credit, by the talents, graces, and high birth which led to their monastic elevation, making head against their bishops, in the struggle for jurisdiction, resisting all attempts to subject them *à la clôture*, availing themselves of the sanction of the convent, yet participating in all the pleasures and passions of society, courting fame, and alive to glory, they sought to illustrate their conventional reign by such enterprises as were calculated to give their names to posterity.

Among these priestesses of Catholicism, Giovanna di Piacenza was conspicuous for taste, talent, and magnificence. Elected in the flower of her youth and beauty to the abbess's chair at Parma, she began her reign by erecting a sanctuary, worthy of Cnidus, among the rude cloisters of her

monastic seclusion. For the purpose of decorating an apartment dedicated to her own exclusive use, and intended as a monument of her refined taste and patronage of the arts, she invited some of the most distinguished artists of Parma and Modena, but she chose the young and obscure Antonio Allegri of Reggio, called Il Corregio; and she herself selected those subjects which he so beautifully executed, and which were copied or imitated from the antique.

Here were no fearful exhibitions of human suffering, "for the love of God,"—no martyrs broiled, —no saints agonized. Sacrifices indeed there were; but they were innoxious sacrifices offered by young and beautiful priestesses on the altars of Jupiter and Vesta.

Had the accomplished abbess confined the gratification of her tastes to such representations of classical imagery, she might have been pardoned. But she had borrowed more from the ancients than their tastes or their arts;—she had drawn from their pages their love of liberty and noble independence; and she had long resisted the attempts of the bishops and pope to interfere with her jurisdiction.

After a long and noble struggle against the encroachment of the church tyranny, she fell a victim to its resistless power. Her convent was cloistered, and cut off from all human intercourse; and she survived her living entombment but a short time. Her favourite apartment, the monument of her taste, her learning, and her liberality, closed hermetically, even against the sisters of the order, was at last forgotten. The oblivion of near three centuries, concealed from the study and admiration of successive generations those *chefs-d'œuvre* which the enterprize of modern *virtù* finally discovered, for the benefit of a declining art, that had long ceased to produce a Corregio.

While I resided at Rome, my head was still running on “Giovanna of Piacenza,”—when two other subjects fell in my way, (for my work on Italy wrote itself); one of these was Salvator Rosa, not as I have since given it to the public, but as an Italian romance. The idea came into my head as I was sauntering with Cardinal Fesch through the sumptuous rooms of his superb palace, just after we had been looking at one of Salvator’s pictures. On my return home I sketched out the first chapter

of my romance ; but the genius, character, and literary works of Salvator grew into such importance in my mind, “ his times” appeared so full of interest, that I threw aside my romance, and produced his life, one of the most successful of all my trifling works.

Still, in the repertory of my imagination lay my Abbess of Parma, until at last I found a niche for her, in “ the O'Briens and O'Flahertys,” where something of her character, and a literal description of her apartment, in the monastery of St. Paul, is given ; and there she figures away as the Abbess of Moy Cullen.—“ *Au reste*,” all that is said in that novel of the foundress of the “ holy heart,” is historically true : a young, clever, and wealthy *religieuse*, acting by the agency of the Jesuits, did found that mystic worship, which is still throughout Catholic Europe a sign and a focus of jesuitism.

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## THE CAP OF LIBERTY.

THE cap of liberty, which still adorned the milestones near the French capital, in 1813, and which were to have been effaced, in order to make way for Napoleon's eagle, were supplanted at the restoration by the *fleur de lis*. This is the history of the French revolution in a single sentence.

Among the Romans, the presentation of a cap was part of the ceremony observed in the manumission of slaves, and, therefore, perhaps, it was adopted as an emblem of freedom. The custom is still preserved at the investiture of a doctor in the university graduations. The circumstance gives a strong meaning to a whimsical speech of Sir R. St. G., who, at the celebrated Catholic dinner at the Black Abbey, at Kilkenny, got very tipsy. During the process he had made several efforts to be as eloquent as his neighbours, but was coughed

down as often as he got on his legs. In all the sulkiness of a fuddled man, he resolved to go away; but he discovered that his hat had gone before him, and suddenly finding a pause and a subject for his oratory, he exclaimed, “ Gentlemen, I came here to emancipate you, and, d—n you, you have stolen my hat.”

*A propos* to university graduations: when the present Duke of Gloucester took his degree, his father, who was at Cambridge to witness the ceremony, was also complimented with an honorary doctorate. The opportunity was seized upon by the professors to bring into the speeches (in which they introduce their *children*, the new graduates) an appropriate compliment to their illustrious guest. Of this the royal visitor was duly warned; and as it was supposed that he might not have recently “ rubbed up his Latin,” as Queen Elizabeth phrased it, he was directed to be upon the alert, and whenever he caught the word “ *principes*,” to infer a compliment and bow accordingly. With the professors of divinity and of law, things passed as had been pre-arranged, but Sir I. P., the Professor of Physic, was “ ill at

these numbers," and too indolent to compose a speech especially for the occasion ; so away he went with the old humdrum string of common-places, touching the rise, progress, dignity, and importance of the art of honestly committing manslaughter : he had not, however, travelled far, before he arrived at a sentence beginning with " Hippocrates et Galen, principes medicinæ," and down went the head of the old duke, as if Galen and Hippocrates had belonged to the House of Hanover.

### PROVIDENCE.

ARISTOTLE maintained that the barbarians were created expressly to become slaves ;—while La Fiteau, a jesuit, who wrote an history of the aboriginal Americans, believed that none but an atheist would dare to say they were creatures of God's forming. In the same spirit, a modern judge had the assurance to assert that slavery is not contrary to Christianity, because bishops voted for it. Providence is, under all systems, the "*prête-nom*" for the injustices of man.

Madame de Genlis (*Dictionnaire des Etiquettes*) says, “ Providence has instilled an irresistible love of the marvellous into the heart of man, in order to predispose him for receiving without difficulty the celestial lights of faith.” Unfortunately for the hypothesis, this capital contrivance has been as much at the service of the “devilish darkness” of a thousand-and-one false religions, as of the “celestial lights” of catholicity. If Voltaire had uttered such a sentiment, it would have been said, and with justice, that his object was to bring religion into contempt, and to expose the rougery of priests, who trade upon the weakness of human nature. Men love the marvellous, because they are greedy of strong sensations; and, as this propensity hurries them into false tastes, so it predisposes them to superstition and false creeds. Protestantism has too little of the marvellous for the warm sensibilities of the south; and even Madame de Genlis’ popery is not wonderful enough for the good people of Spain and Portugal.

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## TAKING A SHOWER BATH.

A GREAT senator and statesman of the “ Irish nation,” being ordered a shower-bath lately, sent to the physician, who had prescribed the remedy, to know if he might soften the shock by wearing a brazen bason on his head. Oh, Cruikshank ! what a subject ! Bath, bason, statesman, and all !! And yet this being is a particle of the “ collective wisdom” to which the destiny of a great nation is confided. Institutions which provide for human happiness can throw up no barricado to stem the influx of human absurdity : that which is made for man, and by man, is inevitably exposed to the imperfections both of the agent and object of all systems.

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## VIEWS OF THE CATHOLIC QUESTION.

"I suppose, my lord," said the foreign valet of the Earl of P——, the other day, "I suppose we shall have the opera and the theatres open in England on Sundays, *comme ailleurs*, if the Catholic Bill passes?"

"I have not heard *that*," replied his lordship, smiling; "and I should rather think the contrary."

"*Diantre*," replied the French emancipator, grinding his teeth, "*Eh à quoi bon donc leur émancipation? qu'est ce que ça fait?*"\*

"Let me send you some turbot, L——," said Mr. ——, the other day at dinner, to a well-known and respectable Irish catholic barrister.

"Turbot," replied the papist counsellor, coldly, "O! I am emancipated—I have done with fish!"

The Irish catholics hate fish; but are rigorous

\* "What, then, is the use of emancipation?"

observers of fasts, and of all forms and ordinances imposed by a church, to which, as much from a point of honour as of faith, they rigidly submit. How many of the idle forms of church discipline will fall into desuetude, with that feeling of sympathy for the persecuted faith that imposed them ! a feeling which catholic emancipation will cool down, and obliterate.

## VIRAGOS.

WOMEN of strong tempers always govern their husbands; women of strong minds influence them. A man's sole refuge against an ill-tempered wife is to run away from her, which he generally does when he can. The influence of a clever woman lies in the power she has of hiding it. Still the virago, I believe, has the best of it: for if the man, in affecting to submit, very frequently only conceals, still he endures. The key to the government of all men is their passions ; and after these—but this is shewing up the mystery of the craft ;

“ Plague on it, that rogues can't be true to themselves.”

## FEMALE PERSEVERANCE.

" Nous n'avons point de diable, assez diable, pour tenir tête à une méchante femme."\*

*La Descente de Mezzeten en Enfer.*

WHY are women so much more pertinacious than men? *Voyons un peu!* A woman is like a mastiff; once she seizes on an idea, she never lets go, till she has fairly worried out her end. She has no physical strength; no force of reason comparable with man's; but she has a stronger volition. The toughness of her will is a set-off against the fragility of her means; and she substitutes perseverance for power. Man yields, after a struggle, to her concentrated weakness, because he hates whatever interferes with his enjoyment. Like Falstaff, he loves above all things, "To take mine ease in mine inn;" and to avoid a domestic bore, will

\* "There is no devil, sufficiently a devil, to make head against a wicked woman."

assent to much, even when he does not approve. Man is essentially an epicurean ; and woman, from necessity, a stoic. In public affairs the mere force of volition often supplies the place of talent and resources ; while its absence neutralizes and renders inefficient intellects of the finest and highest quality. To this may be referred much of the success of female intrigue, under the governments which have permitted its operation. It was doubtless to the reiterated attacks of Madame du Barri, that Louis the Fifteenth yielded, when he abandoned the most estimable and enlightened of his ministers, *De Choiseul*; and a similar obstinacy in the unfortunate *Marie Antoinette* goaded her reluctant husband into that course of duplicity and vacillation, which brought them both to a scaffold

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## OPINION.

INTOLERANCE is the offspring of conceit: we push an opinion, because it is our own, and resent contradiction as a personal insult. Very few persons, however, have any lawful right of property in their own ideas. The greatest number of our opinions are corporate, and belong to the age and country in which we happen to be born. No inconsiderable quantity belong to that venerable and respectable personage, our old nurse. Even the few notions which strong thinkers develope for themselves, depend very closely on habits of thought, impressed by tutors and parents, modified by external circumstances, equally uncontrollable. If some of our worthy anti-catholic, anti-reforming, corn-trade-fettering aristocrats, could be made sensible of the very vulgar origin of many of their favourite ideas, they would as soon shake hands with a chimney-sweeper as entertain them.

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## WIVES OF FOOLS.

OH ! ye women, who have the good, or ill luck (*selon*) to be married to fools, attempt not to reason with your dcars—expect not to seduce, and despair of persuading. Wit, grace, and understanding, are only influential with men of feeling and intellect: to such arms the sensible and the clever never fail to yield. But the fool “ bears a charmed life.” Remember the maxim of your great law-giver: “ *On ne séduit pas un sot ; on le dompte.*”\* A fool is incapable of giving quarter, and unworthy of receiving it. The worst of a fool is not that he *is* a fool, but that he is so self-sufficient and self-conceited ; just as obscure people become burthensome, when they imagine themselves important ; and as those who live out of the world are unmanageable, from a fancy that all the

\* “ Fools are not to be seduced ; they must be overpowered.”

world is occupied about them. Foolish husbands are always jealous of their authority, and fearful of being supposed to be ruled ; they oppose, for the sake of asserting themselves, even when their inclinations are neutral : and once launched into an opposition, they persevere, in spite of conviction, because it does not become their dignity to be less wise than a woman.

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## LES ROCHERS DE MAD. DE SÉVIGNÉ.

“ Travellers ne'er did lie, though fools at home condemn them.”

SHAKSPEARE.

IT is no longer possible to exclaim with Madame de Sévigné, “ c'est une chose étrange, que les grands voyages !” *Les grands voyages*, on the contrary, have become the most common and every-day events of life ! A “ good traveller” has ceased to be “ something at the latter end of a dinner,” as La Feu has it : and to talk of the “ Pyrenean and the river Po,” would now incur for the prosing delinquent the character of a bore, and the penalty of being once heard and ever after avoided. Travelling, even to “ Judah's barren sands,” is no longer a distinction ; and the Traveller's Club has so completely become every body's club, that it has been proposed, by way of something really exclusive, to start a *crocchio ristretto* of those who

have never travelled at all. To talk of a visit to Paris is as cockney as to prate of the lakes of Cumberland or to cite their poets ; to boast of having seen the Pope *pontificate*, is as pure a John-Gilpinism, as to chatter of Forthill ; and to have “ swum in a gondola” is no more thought of, God save the mark ! than a voyage in the Richmond steamer. The Pacific Ocean and the British Channel have become subjects equally commonplace ; and if another Peyrouse should disappear from the world, it is odds but he would be picked up in a month by some wandering dandy from Bond-street, or discovered on an *uninhabited island* by a roving detachment from the Yacht Club.

“ How came you to alter your route last year ? I thought to have met you at Thebes !”

“ Oh ! I changed my mind, on hearing that half Bloomsbury were there before me ; and so cut off for the North Pole with Parry.”

“ Did you meet any one there one knows ?”

“ No, that’s the charm of it. White bears excepted, one has the place to one’s self. Whom did you have, by the by, at Athens last year ?”

“ Scarcely a soul ; at least, scarcely a soul

‘above buttons.’ There were a few third-rate English and first-rate Irish to be seen, sauntering about the Acropolis, and making *goûtés* in the Parthenon ; but *pas âme qui vive*—that one ever heard of before. The A.’s pushed on for the Pyramids, the B.’s have been some time settled on the brow of Mount Caucasus, C. left us in the spring for the Crimea, and D. joined his eternal Pylades at Ispahan.”

“ At Ispahan ! what a fellow that D. is, with his eternal pretensions to taste ! Go to Ispahan ! when one is sick of it, and its Hajji Babas of Bond-street, and all that sort of thing. No one turns his horse’s head to the South now, unless indeed it were in search of the *terra incognita*. It is the merest *pont aux ânes*. One’s very tailor passes his *vacances* at Smyrna (where mine, by the by, picked up some charming cachemirs, to make cool coats for next winter) ; and you know the old story of Lady Lydia’s maid and Monsieur Forbin, and the silk parasol, in the ruins of Thebes. The North, Sir, the North is the only thing now, the Frozen sea, or Kamtschatka, *via* Moscow, that’s

my *carte de voyage* for the next travelling season.  
Have you seen my Droschka?"

"No; but I have a Britska waiting for me at Petersburgh. I am going to join Lord Frederick J—, who has the prettiest thing on the Sea of Azoff, built by Potemkin. Will you be *des nôtres?*"

"With all my heart. Let us rendezvous at Novogorod, embark at Smolensko on the Dnieper, and so proceed by Kerson and the steppes."

"Exactly; and that will bring us within two verstes of Lord F.'s villa."

It is thus that the home-bred youths "prate of their whereabouts." Not only *il n'y a plus de Pyrénées*, but the total annihilation of time and place seems to have realized the poet's rant, and to have turned the nursery-dream of Peter Wilkins and his flying men to a "flat reality." While British travellers are thus illustrating the "march of mind," by marching off to all parts of the globe, and

"When pleasure begins to grow dull in the East,  
Just order their wings and fly off to the West,"

there is a nation which keeps its ground with all that tenacity of a toad on a tile\*—a nation which, compared by some to tigers, by others to monkeys, and by Voltaire to both, appears to have been the least understood of any nation on earth. For while the North in hordes come swarming, as of old, over the sunny regions of the South, and while the south seems to change sides, hands across, down the middle and up again, in a cosmopolitan country-dance with the natives of the frozen North, the French, who stand between both, are sure to be always found at home. For one French traveller, of either sex, to be met on the high roads of Europe, one thousand, at least, of any, or every other nation, may be seen scampering from the Tagus to the Neva, and from Thebes to the Giant's Causeway. The French are, in fact, the most grave, sedentary, and immovable people of Europe. Even their women, so falsely accused of vivacity and activity, expend their energies in perpetual movement of mind and muscle. Under the old régime (when the women in France led the

\* A friend of mine kept a pet toad in his cellar, and for nine years it never stirred off the tile which it had chosen for its habitation.

lives of the sultanas in the harem, one particular only excepted), all the institutions, both political and social, tended to encourage habits of indolence, in which, in free states, and under happier moral combinations, the sex can never indulge. The very forms and language of high society were borrowed from the inveterate habits of a slavish, idle, and sedentary existence. Did any affliction befall a lady of rank, she forthwith went to bed, to receive the condolence of friends *dans la rue*. If she went to drive, it was but to *promener en voiture*; and even in modern Paris, a promenade extends but to a seat in the gardens of the Tuileries, or a chair on the Boulevards.

I had a friend in Paris, some few years ago, who was the most charming and most indolent creature in the world. She was one of the best remains of the old régime of rank and fashion, who had survived the plebeian bustle and democratic activity of the Revolution. Though she had nearly reached her grand climacteric, she was, as she often assured me, still “as active, vivacious, and locomotive as she had been in the flower and bloom of her youth;” and, witty

and indolent as Madame du Deffand herself, she was a finely preserved specimen of a genus, now rapidly disappearing, which philosophy might have contemplated with rapturous curiosity. Madame de —— was a perfect impersonation of a lady of fashion of the days of Marie Antoinette. Her *ruelle* was her empire; her *chaise longue* her throne. She took her chocolate, and received visits in bed, during the day; rose late, dined at the hour of the old French *souper*, between eight and nine, and sat up half the night, surrounded by her *habitues*, among whom were to be numbered all the *bel esprit* of Paris.

I was as much with her as my health and our very opposed habits would permit, for she was a perfect study; and I generally left her in the midst of her *media nocte*, in all the vigour of spirits which are vulgarly supposed to belong to the early part of the day. As I made many sacrifices to these habits of indolence, I occasionally required them in turn; and I sometimes succeeded in digging her out of her hotel, where she had for years been niched, motionless as the priestesses of the temples of Pompeii, which modern *virtù* excavates

from their domicile of centuries. I once routed her from her bed at mid-day ; and had her dressed and driving at Longchamp, just as the *beau monde* were turning their horses' heads homeward. I also once produced her, to the amazement of her friends, at the opera, before the ballet was half over ; and I actually had her at a *séance* of the *Institut* before the expected *discours* of the long-winded Mons. Quatremère de Quincy had quite concluded.

My indolent and agreeable friend, notwithstanding this decided *vis inertiae*, talked in raptures of the country (like all French women), and had a *campagne* three leagues from Paris, about which she raved, and from which her *jardinière* was duly replenished with March violets, April hyacinths, and *immortels* all the year. Daily projects were made, and as daily broken, for taking me to this “Délices ;” and it was not till after a thousand “Nous remettrons cela à un autre jour,” that the day at last arrived, when, having myself made all the necessary preparations for a formidable journey of three leagues, assisted at the *levée*, hurried forward the toilette, and bribed over Félicie, her unfelicitous *femme de chambre*, to unusual expedition, I at last got

Madame de —— under weigh, and absolutely transported her from her *dormeuse au coin du feu*, to her *calèche*. With horses and a coachman as lazy as herself, it was late in the evening when we arrived within view of the iron gates of the *campagne*; and before we had reached the end of the straight avenue of limes, it was so dark that we could scarcely discern the grim, grotesque stone statues of Arlequin and Columbine, which guarded the flight of marble steps, leading to the broad paved terrace on which the *maison de campagne* was perched.

Before we had reposed from the fatigues of the journey, and swallowed our *goûté*, it was what is vulgarly called pitch-dark; and as the motive for making this *course* was to see the gardens, the *serres chaudes*, and the luxuriant beds of hyacinths, then in all their “redolence of bloom,” I could not help expressing my disappointment, with a captiousness which afforded infinite amusement to Madame de ——, whose bursts of laughter were interrupted with “Et tout cela pour une fleur! pour un promenade! pour une fatigue manqué!”\* My ill-humour, however, was at once

\* “ And all this for a flower and a walk—for a fatigue the less.”

vanquished, on beholding the gardener enter the room with a lighted lantern, and equipped with a nightcap under his hat, to conduct us to the garden. We immediately followed our guide; and, accompanied by Félicie picking her short steps over the dewy gravel, and her mistress's fat dog, Sylphide, waddling beside her, we actually saw the hyacinths, and noticed the fine growth of the precocious *petits pois*, by candle-light.

With such inertness and hatred of all movement, it may readily be imagined that a necessity, which soon afterwards occurred to Madame de —, for visiting the remotest part of the remote province of Bretagne, was an event full of difficulty and annoyance. A considerable property, however, depended on her attendance on the *Cour d'Assise* of Rennes, and there was no alternative.

After procrastinating from day to day, and being half inclined to incur the risk of absence, and to leave her *procès* to take care of itself, she at length decided to go on my offering to accompany her. I was just then in a fit of *ennui* at finding all London in Paris, and was delighted by the hope of visiting a province that had the merit

of being free from the incursions of his Britannic Majesty's somewhat tiresome subjects. My proposition was accepted with a sort of incredulous joy ; for a sacrifice of such magnitude was not to be understood : so leaving behind us *tous nos enfans et tous nos maris*, we started for Brittany, on a brilliant April morning, in a style that recalled the travelling of the days of Louis XIV. when the *carrosse d'un Grand Seigneur* was a moving house, and (from the number of persons to be stuffed into its *portières*, its *sur le devant*, and other holes and corners) a house of no inconsiderable dimensions.

Madame de —— travelled with her own four sleek horses, her own carriage, and as many of her habitual comforts and *nécessaires* as could be stuffed into its seats, pockets, wells, and imperials. Félicie and Sylphide occupied the back seats, as tenants in common with cushions, pillows, walking-canées, parasols, *vitchouras*, and the *nécessaire de toilette*. Madame de ——, wrapped up in her *douillette* and *cachemir*, with *eau de chipre* in one hand, and her *bonbonnière* in the other, was obliged to

have frequent recourse to both, in order to support her through the fatigue of the day. The historical sites of Rambouillet and Maintenon, on the contrary, kept me fully awake, till we arrived at the old town of ——, one of Madame de Sévigné's oft-cited stages, on her way to Les Rochers. Here we alighted before the *porte-cochère* of the *Préfet* (the uncle of Madame de ——, à la mode de Bretagne), whose salon presented in miniature all that is ridiculous, pompous, grovelling, and contemptible in the Court of the Tuilleries. The *Préfet* represented noblement et avec dignité, and did the honours by his fair cousin, before his country subjects, as if she were a princess visiting the court of a brother prince ; while Madame de ——, on her part, exhibited all the superiority, which Parisian ladies never fail to show off in their penitential pilgrimages to the provinces.

Amused for a time, but delighted to leave behind me the formality of the little court of the Prefecture, it was with no faint pleasure I saw my dilatory friend seated in her carriage at a reasonable hour on the following morning. Being

one of those who, like Boileau's abbot, had never seen the sun rise, the exertion soon overpowered her; and she fell into a profound sleep, in which she was joined by Sylphide and Félicie; while the novelty of all I beheld, kept me in that delightful excitement, in which alone we truly feel the value of existence.

The old feudal dukedom of Bretagne, intact from the common places of British travellers, untrodden by their restless steps, untraced by their busy pens—is still the Bretagne of Louis XIV. The natives continue to preserve their individuality, as in the days of their rude but heroic *souverains*. Genuine and unmixed descendants of the ancient Britons (who took refuge here when expelled from their own country), they remain to this day as unlike the inhabitants of the southern and central provinces of France, as if they still went *in puris naturalibus*, and painted their bodies blue. We had scarcely passed the Loire, when I observed an abrupt change in the physiognomy of the people. In the pure Armorican, or Bas-Breton of the aubergiste of the ancient town of Laval, I was struck by the rhythm and accent of my compa-

tricts, the Celts,\* and almost fancied myself listening to some Mrs. O'Shaughnessy in Connaught, or to the reading of a page from the Scotch novels. As we proceeded into the department of *Ille et Vilaine*, the heart of the province, the scenery became gradually less and less French. The dense and distant forests, shading to the edge of the flat, extensive heaths, recalled all the romantic desolation of northern dreariness; relieved by patches of rank verdure and flowering orchards, much more picturesque than the vaunted "vine-covered hills" of France.

Bretagne, only united to the French crown in 1532, by the marriage of Francis the First with the grand-daughter of its last duke, was so long governed in the true spirit of feudalism by its petty but warlike princes, that its political circumstances, combining with a remote and insulated position, excluded it from all participation in the progressive civilization of Europe. In the Revolution, it suf-

\* When Louis XIV. sent an army to dragoon the Britons into submission, on their resistance to his oppressive taxation, they fell on their knees, and cried aloud, " Mea culpa, mea culpa !" " C'étoit," says Madame de Sévigné, " le seul mot de François qu'ils savoient."

fered much by the Vendean wars, which threw it back nearly to what it was under Louis XIV.; nor has the share which it had in the general reorganization of France, materially changed its original physiognomy, either physically or morally. Rude and remote, however, as it was, it still produced some of the finest and most distinguished characters which illustrate the history of France. The two rival and romantic Dukes, Charles de Blois, and John de Montfort;+ the heroic Jeanne

† The *Traité des Landes*, made between these two pretenders to the Duchy, was characteristic of the men and times.—“Rien de plus simple que les conditions. Le Duché étoit partagé en deux. Chacun devoit porter le titre de Due, et avoir sa capitale; Rennes pour l'un, Nantes pour l'autre. On se sépara avec promesses de se rejoindre, dans un lieu indiqué, pour convenir des arrangemens que le partage exigeoit, et recevoir la ratification de la Duchesse, Jeanne la Boiteuse, épouse de Charles de Blois. C'est d'elle, qu'il tenoit le duché de Bretagne. Quand elle eut lu le traité que son mari lui envoya, elle dit à celui qui l'apportoit, ‘Il fait trop bon marché de ce qui n'est pas à lui;’ et dans sa lettre de réponse, elle lui mandoit, ‘Vous ferez ce qu'il vous plaira; je ne suis qu'une femme, et ne puis mieux: mais plutôt je perdrais la vie, ou deux si je les avais, avant de consentir à chose si réprochable, à la honte des miens.’ Sa lettre étoit mouillée de larmes; l'époux en fut ému; et encore plus, lorsque en quittant sa femme, qu'il étoit allé voir, elle lui dit, ‘Conservez-moi votre cœur, mais aussi conservez-moi mon Duché; et quelque chose qu'arrive, faites que la souveraineté me reste toute entière.’ Il le promit, baissa sa dame, et partit.”—ANQUETIL.

la Boiteuse, Duchess of the province, in whose right Charles de Blois held the sovereignty; the clever Olivier de Clisson, constable of France; the gallant Tennegui du Chatel; and that flower of chivalry, Bertrand du Guesclin “ le franc et loyal,” are characters which belong to the poetry of history, and almost redeem those bold, bad times, which produced such human monsters as Charles le Mauvais, and Pierre le Cruel. It is, perhaps, no false induction to assert, that much of their soldierly frankness and noble simplicity arose from an organization, nourished and preserved by the very localities of the rude clime and wild scenery in which they received their existence.

With the history of Bertrand du Guesclin in my hand, which had been lent me by my host of the Prefecture, (that history which Madame de Sévigné had recommended to Madame de Grignan,) and with my head full of de Montfort and de Blois, and *les grandes compagnies*, and the *mala-drins*, and the Black Prince, and Jean Chandos, and the other prominent characters in the great melodrame enacted in Bretagne during the fourteenth century, I was abruptly recalled to the dull

realities of the present moment, on the evening of the third day's journey, by a shock, a concussion, that awoke my sleeping partners, and extorted exclamations from Madame de ——, screams from Félicie, and a loud, shrill, continuous howl from Sylphide. These, with the crashing of *flacons*, and the pious interjections of the coachman Baptiste, and the *gros juron* of Hypolite the laquais, "gave the world assurance" that we were "abîmés, plantés pour la nuit,"—in one word, that the carriage was not only overturned, but rendered wholly unserviceable, till it should have passed through the renovating hands of a country smith.

To proceed farther was impossible; we were, by a mile or two, less than half-way between Vitri (where we had dined, "à la tour de Sévigné,") and Rennes, our proposed halt for the night. Baptiste was a Bas-Breton; and having assured us that he knew every step of the road, *comme son bonnet de nuit*, he had turned into a narrow cross road, which was to have shortened the distance by a league. It was this unlucky pretension that produced the accident, which now left us, at

sunset, in a dreary by-road, with a broken-down vehicle, and no visible prospect of aid, nearer than Vitri. While Madame de —— was exhausting herself in inefficient complaint, while Félicie was scolding Baptiste from the window, and Sylphide was accompanying both with a *basso continuo* of howl, I alighted to reconnoitre our position, and discover what chance we had of assistance; and while Baptiste was showing me where the spring was broken, a person approached with a book in his hand, from the gate of a little orchard to the left. As he took off his hat and discovered his tonsured head, he observed, that there was a forge belonging to the château, the turrets of which were visible through the dark woods which cover the whole plain between Vitri and Rennes; that immediate assistance could be had, and the spring patched up, so as to bring us, with careful driving, to Rennes before midnight. The person who gave us this information was an elderly man, of interesting appearance, and in a clerical habit, with a certain *air de prêtre*, which left us no doubt as to his vocation.

"Et le château, Monsieur?" demanded Madame de — ; "what is its name? It probably belongs to some of my friends; for I am connected with nearly all the old noblesse of the province."

"It is the Château des Rochers, Madame!"

"The Château des Rochers!" reiterated Madame de —.

"The château of Madame de Sévigné!" I exclaimed, with almost breathless delight.

The stranger bowed assent. "Eh, mon dieu! qui est donc le châtelain? to what noble family has it descended? The Sévignés are extinct; and I believe Les Rochers were bequeathed to the Duchesse de Simiane by her illustrious grandmother."

"Les Rochers have fallen into various hands within the last half-century, Madame. It was sold, with other national property, at the Revolution. The present proprietor is a rich gentleman of the province, Le Baron de —. He is at present in Paris; but there will be no difficulty in showing you the château, which may amuse away the time till your carriage is set to rights."

Madame de ——, who had not heard the name of the present proprietor of Les Rochers, whispered me, “ Ah ! ma belle, ce Monsieur le Baron d'aujourd'hui est sans doute une de la Bande Noire,”\* coldly declined the proposition, and as rest, to her, was always enjoyment, she patiently resigned herself to the agreeable infliction of remaining tranquilly in the carriage; while Félicie, who descended to give Sylphide an airing, immediately seated herself on a mossy bank by the road side; and Hypolite, mounting one of the coach-horses, rode off for the smith, the smoke of whose forge was visible at a short distance.

The idea of visiting Les Rochers, whence so many of the inimitable letters of the most charming writer in the world were written, appeared to me rather a pleasant dream, than a reality. I could scarcely credit my luck. So taking the stranger's offered arm, I promised Madame de —— a speedy return, and proceeded to the shrine of “Notre Dame des Rochers,” with as much devotional enthusiasm as ever carried a jubilee pilgrim across the Pontine

\* “ This mushroom Baron is most likely one of the Black band”—the purchasers and dilapidators of the forfeited châteaux.

Marshes, from the Abruzzi to St. Peter's. Having cut across the little orchard, we were still involved in a woody copse, which gave us only partial gleams of the white towers of the château. “Envoyez-moi de la vue, et je vous enverrai des arbres,”\* writes Madame de Sévigné to Madame de Grignan: and the request is still applicable to the site, which is covered with trees, to the total exclusion of some charming views, which, with a little effort, might be happily commanded from the building. The château and its mass of antique towers stand upon an esplanade, after the manner of the feudal edifices of France. *La cour du château*, spacious and gloomy, is shut in by a ponderous iron gate, through which I gazed with a fluttering heart, while the old porter, summoned by the stranger, went for his keys to give us admission. Nothing could be more antique and picturesque than the architecture, tinged and partially lighted, as it was, by a brilliant sunset. The château is said to date its erection as far back as the fourteenth century; and its high antiquity was verified by a spiral flight of stairs, cut out of a tower in the *corps de logis*;

\* “Send me your prospects, and I will send you my trees.”

which was flanked by two other towers,—the whole bordered by grim Gothic heads, and monstrous nondescript representations of animals, which incrusted the upper part of the building, from the springing of the roof to its summit. One little tower stood apart, built in the same grotesque style, except that its roof resembled an extinguisher.

“That,” said my cicerone, “is a modern building. It is the chapel mentioned in Madame de Sévigné’s letters, built by her for *le bien bon*, the amiable and witty Abbé de Coulanges.”

The porter now gave us admittance; and as we paused before the interesting edifice, which, with Turkish barbarity, had been recently whitewashed, he exclaimed, “It is another thing now, *pardie*, to what it was before the Revolution, with its green and brown walls, and moss, and ivy, and birds’ nests, and what not! — Mais nous avons changés tout cela—nous avons reblanchi toutes ces vieilles masures, à la chaux; et encore donné trois couches bien épaisses en dehors et en dedans.”\*

\* “We have whitewashed all the old premises, and given them three coats, inside and out.”

The old porter then waddled on before us, and the stranger observed, in a low voice, as if replying to the disgust my looks involuntarily expressed, “ Monsieur le Concierge, it seems, has never read the letters of Madame de Sévigné. They have indeed changed this most interesting of all sites into a grotesque *métairie*;” and pointing to a *lavoir* and stables decorated with Corinthian columns, the curé added, “ And yet this is not the worst !”

We were now in the hall of the château, and followed our cicerone through the apartments not closed against the intrusion of strangers; but all had been so recently and thoroughly changed to the modern style of decoration, that there was scarcely any object left to recal *la bellissima madre*, except her portrait by Mignard, which was placed over *le poële* in the dining-room. Dark, low, and narrow, this apartment could not have been the room in which Madame de Sévigné so often entertained the splendid governor of the province and his lady, the high-bred Palatine, with the jovial, gay, and witty visitors, the Coulanges, Pomenars, and others of rank and talents, whom

the assembling of the States General at Rennes brought to the château. Nothing now remained as it had been even so recently as the year 1810.

"Every thing has been destroyed and effaced," whispered the stranger: "and even the *cabinet de lecture* and the bedchambers of Madame de Sévigné and Madame de Grignan (where the portrait of *la belle et fière comtesse* still hangs) have undergone a similar and equally barbarous alteration."

As these classical and historical apartments were locked up, and as time pressed, and the sun was sinking, we hurried on to the gardens and grounds, so often described by Madame de Sévigné. But still change, barbarous, pitiless change prevailed. New walls, new terraces, new orangeries destroyed all those precious associations so intimately connected with the old. They had also recently cut down those *allées*, planted and watched with such maternal tenderness by Madame de Sévigné; and as their sites were pointed out to me, I could not avoid exclaiming, "Helas! qu'est devenu ce bosquet enchanté?"

"Que voulez-vous, Madame?" asked the old gardener, pettishly. "We have cut them down to make chicken-hatches for Madame."

The stranger, to console me, exhibited the phenomenon of the echo, so often cited to Madame de Grignan, and which, as it could not be turned to any account for the hen-coops, still remains in all its original mystery.

"L'allée de ma fille still existed in 1810," said my guide, as evident a Sevignite as myself; "but there now remains not one of those venerable witnesses, which so often shaded and sheltered in their promenades the tenderest of mothers and the most adored of daughters. Not one old and silent confidant exists of those *piquantes causeries* between the witty *maman beauté*, and that *trésor de folie*, her still wittier son,—of the strange but humorous confessions, followed by such mild reprimands, and such sarcastic pleasantries,—and of those *aveux naïfs de l'aimable vaurien*, who in one night at Lansequenet *mangeait 500 gros chênes à sa mère*, and who, brave as Condé, *spirituel* as St. Evremont, had entered the lists with Dacier, concerning Horace, had lived with Racine,

laughed with Molière, jilted Ninon, *se grisait par bon air*, committed a thousand follies, confessed them all a thousand times to his *belle mamun*, and, always forgiven, continued to repent old pleasures at Les Rochers, and to solicit new, on his return to Paris."

I inquired in vain for those formal and venerable *allées*, ornamented with so many pretty devices, and consecrated by such recollections ;—all had fallen victims to the axe of the terrible Baron Breton. Their names, however, still survived ; and I had the melancholy pleasure of walking over the ground which was still known as “ l’Allée Royale,” “ l’Allée du Point du Jour,” “ l’Allée de Tremaine,” and “ l’Allée de l’Infinie.” At the farther extremity of the Allée Royale, a semi-circular seat of verdure, commanding a delicious view of the *coteaux boisés* of the immediate neighbourhood, invited us to a momentary halt. This was the charming spot, whence Madame de Sevigné wrote so many of her letters,—“ la Place de Madame.” It was decorated with a fine old orange-tree, which had been removed from its vast green-house, in a wooden *caisse*, by the stranger

himself, in the absence of the baron. While we gazed on the rich and lovely vista, the sunlight gradually faded from the summits of the loftiest trees, the shadows deepened, and the necessity of returning was acknowledged with regret, and obeyed with reluctance.

Having begged permission, therefore, to gather a little *bouquet* from the orange-tree which shaded "la Place de Madame," I again accepted the arm of the courteous cicerone. As we proceeded towards the carriage, my thoughts were so completely transported to the days of the La Rochefoucaulds, the Coulanges, and the La Moussés, that, forgetting the lapse of a century, and of events that had doubled that interval, I inquired if any of the family of the amusing Mademoiselle du Plessis, the *bas bleu* of Vitri, and the subject of Madame de Sevigné's humorous delineations, were still in the neighbourhood.\* He replied, that of the *dramatis personæ*

\* "Mademoiselle du Plessis est tout justement comme vous l'avez laissée. Elle a une nouvelle amie à Vitri, dont elle se pare, parceque c'est un bel esprit, qui a lu tous les romans, et qui a reçu deux lettres de la Princesse de Tarente. J'ai fait dire méchamment par Vaillant, que je ne témoignerais rien ; mais que mon cœur étoit saisi. Tout ce qu'elle dit là-dessus, est digne de Molière."

of Les Rochers, of all those who had played such amusing and characteristic parts in the correspondence of Madame de Sevigné, he knew but one name that had survived the lapse of time and the general *bouleversement*. It was that of Pilois.

“ What !” I said, “ the favourite and venerable gardener of Madame de Sevigné, who planted those very trees under whose shade we are walking ?\* Do any of his descendants reside here ?”

“ His great grandson has the honour of addressing you,” he replied, bowing.

We were now within view of the carriage ; and taking from my neck a little cross of Irish bogwood, I requested him to accept of it, as a small token of acknowledgment for the pleasure I had derived through his means, in being permitted to visit the shrine of the goddess “ of my idolatry,” and to enjoy a conversation with the descendant of her faithful friend and domestic, to whose cha-

\* “ Mes petits arbres sont d'une beauté suprenante. Pilois les élève jusqu'au nues. Rien n'est si beau que ces Allées, que vous avez vu naître. Vous savez que je vous donnai une manière de dévise, qui vous convenit. Voici un mot que j'ai écrit sur un arbre pour mon fils, qui est revenu de Candie, ‘ vago di fama.’ ”—

*Lettres de Madame de Sévigné*, p. 200.

racter his illustrious lady had communicated a classic and deathless interest. The good clergyman blushed, bowed, and accepted my offering, with as much courtesy, and a feeling apparently as deep, as if it had been of "one entire and perfect crysolite." The spring was now patched up, and pronounced capable of carrying us to Rennes. We therefore bade a hasty adieu to our accidental acquaintance, and soon lost sight of the ancient and memorable towers of Le Château des Rochers.\*

\* This article, already printed, has been so favourably received by the public, that I have ventured to reclaim it from the miscellany in which it originally appeared. It may be scarcely necessary to add, that as far as the personal narrative is concerned, the production is a mere *jeu d'esprit*, undertaken to fulfil a task incurred at a game of forfeits.

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## STRAWBERRY HILL.

" Some cry up Gunnersbury,  
     For Sion some declare,  
 And some say that with Chiswick House  
     No villa can compare ;  
 But ask the beaux of Middlesex,  
     Who know the country well,  
 If Strawberry Hill—if Strawberry Hill  
     Don't bear away the bell."

*Earl of Bath's Ballad on Strawberry Hill.*

LORD BYRON has somewhere observed, that it has long been the fashion for the *canaille* of literary criticism to vituperate Horace Walpole, "because he was a gentleman." An unfounded observation, which the "*Edinburgh Review*" has successfully refuted,—and refuted upon the testimony of a deeper experience, and more intimate knowledge of the science of literary economy (if the phrase may be allowed,) than could have been attained by one, whose high rank, and high genius, alike placed him far beyond the dabblings of

literary intrigue, or the possibility of intellectual subserviency.

If ministers of state best know every man's price in the political market, if they are best acquainted with the inherent littleness of that "poor human nature," to the corruptibility of which they have the means of applying such powerful stimulants, such resistless temptations,—the editors of an influential party and periodical work best know of what stuff those "Swiss of the press" are made, who deal out opinion according "to the measure that is measured unto them" by their taskers,—of what mixed metal the current coin of literary criticism is composed, which ductile, though base, takes the mark of any dye impressed on it by the master-worker of the mint. The Edinburgh Reviewers, therefore, told Lord Byron, and told him truly, that, as a body, the periodical critics of the day bore no malice against Lord Orford, because he was "a gentleman," and that, far from rank being injurious to literary fame, even *he*, Lord Byron, *the star of the ascendant*, stood indebted for the lenity with which the author of "Don Juan" was treated by the most orthodox reviewers

in England, at least as much to the elevation of his rank, as to the loftiness of his genius—to his “gentle blood,” as to his splendid talents. The fact is, that if

“A saint in crape be twice a saint in lawn,”

an author in a coronet has *twice* the chance of obtaining a favourable judgment, that can be expected by mere plebeian talent, which has only its original merits to plead for those “sins” which all literary “flesh is heir to”

With what indulgence has not the accomplished, but titled Author of “*Matilda*” been treated by the reviewing hierarchy of the day, even in spite of the little *faux-pas* which forms the ground-work of his catastrophe,—in spite of the *vertu de moins* of his *bon-ton* heroine,—in spite of a moral produced by a cold in the head (when a more legitimate source of poetical justice was at hand, in the fate and story of many fair contemporary *délaissées* in real life and living frailty)—nay, in spite even of his whiggism, his liberalism, and his anti-Austrianism; and when rebuked; how gently and with what a *patte de velours* has this lordly

author been treated by the great conservators of public and literary morals. What honours indeed have not been done to the light and pleasant pages of one, who has so agreeably added to the daily increasing list of noble authors,\* and who is certainly something more than “a wit among lords, and a lord among wits.” But who among the literary toparchs, who are so ready to bring mediocrity into fashion, and to patronize the usurpations that can never interfere with their own acknowledged supremacy—who among the great fame-bestowing reviewers, that “give and take away” the bubble reputation, or try to do it, have turned out the author of “Crohoore of the Bill Hook,” and “John Doe,” for public admiration? And yet in these two great pictures of an unopened vein of national manners, there is as

\* Every possible encouragement should be held out to the rising aristocracy, to pursue other roads to distinction than those acquired by coronets and quarterings. Upon such heaven-born distinctions, the world is now somewhat *désabusé*, thanks to the Monsieur Tonsons of the French revolution, and ~~à la~~ Jesuitism and *toujours en arrière* vocation of the *premier sang Chrétien de l'Europe*. The *bel air* pages of “Matilda” and “Granby,” light as they are, are real benefactions, after the eternal imitations of the Scotch novels.

bold etching, and as fine masses of *chiaro oscuro*, as were ever produced even by the exquisite burin of the Scottish Rembrandt. It was not, then, the gentility of Horace Walpole, that stood in the way of his preferment in reviews, and his popularity with the members of literary coteries. Yet that he has been borne down, from his own to the present time, both by the corporate bodies, and by the honorary members of criticism, is quite true —his claims to genius denied, his pretensions to taste ridiculed, his style termed “ slip-slop,” his “ Historic Doubts” doubted, and his villa at Strawberry Hill, which he himself has named “ a paper fabric to hold an assemblage of curious trifles,” selected as a *damning proof* against his antiquarianism, by the learned young gentlemen of the “ old lady’s logic”—(the learning which draws fools from their obscurity) — who have always affected to consider it as a “ Gothic Vatican of Greece and Rome,” and a standing monument of his ignorance of all true *virtù*. And yet Horace Walpole *has* established his claims to genius by its

\* Archaeology, so called playfully by H. W.

own highest prerogative—original invention ! His “ Castle of Otranto” is the first of its genus,\* and has consecrated him the founder of that delightful school of literary fiction, of which Radcliffe, Scott, and a host of far inferior spirits, are but the disciples;† while his “ Cor-

\* “ It was an attempt to blend the two kinds of romance,” says its author, “ the ancient and the modern. In the former, all was imagination and improbability : in the latter, nature is always intended to be (and sometimes has been) copied with success. Invention has not been wanting ; but the great resources of fancy have been dammed up, by a strict adherence to common life. But if in the latter species nature has cramped imagination, she did but take her revenge, having been totally excluded from old romances. The actions, sentiments, conversations, of the heroes and heroines of ancient days, were as unnatural as the machines employed to put them in motion.”—*Preface to the second edition of Otranto.*

† The first imitation of Otranto was “ The Old English Baron,” of which Walpole gives the following notice. “ I have seen, too, the criticism you mention on ‘ The Castle of Otranto,’ in the preface to ‘ The Old English Baron.’ It is not at all oblique, but, though mixed with high compliments, directly attacks the visionary part, which, says the author or authoress, makes one laugh. I do assure you, I have not had the smallest inclination to return that attack. It would even be ungrateful, for the work is a professed imitation of mine, only stripped of the marvellous—and so entirely stripped, except in one awkward attempt at a ghost or two, that it is the most insipid dull nothing you ever saw. It certainly does not make one laugh ; for what makes one doze, seldom makes one merry.”—*Correspondence of Horace Walpole.*

respondence" has supplied to British literature that elegant branch of familiar composition, so long a desideratum. The letters of Horace Walpole have almost the merit of original inventions, compared with all the printed collections which preceded his own, (with the sole exception of those of his contemporary, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu.\*). The letters of Howell (deemed models in their time) had long been condemned by the standard simplicity of modern taste, which loves epigrams, and hates essays; and had already taken their places on the dusty shelves

"With all such reading as is never read."

\* Lady M. W. Montagu's letters, judged by the conventional standard of modern refinement, must be deemed occasionally vulgar, coarse, and indelicate; but they are clever, spirited, and easy, and invaluable for the traits of manners they have preserved of her own times. Her anecdotes of her friends, Moll Skerratt, Peg Pelham, Biddy Noel, and the pretty fellows,—her lady-like remedy against spleen, galloping all day, and champagne at night,—are exquisite. Her account also of the state of morals, in those good old times, is worth quoting:—"When honour, virtue, and reputation, are laid aside like crumpled ribbons, the forlorn state of matrimony is as much ridiculed by young ladies as by young fellows."—See her Letters, Vol. I.

It is worth adding, that Lady Mary was so sensible of the supe-

The quaint and peremptory style of Swift's never *very familiar* epistles (his Journal to Stella excepted), though certainly a pure and sterling specimen of the English language of the Augustan day, wanted that *laissez-aller* charm, which is the perfection of letter-writing; and Pope's *Vouiture*-like and *spirituel* epistles, have all the air of being got up for print, and were evidently as much intended for the public and his publisher, as for his mistress or his friend.\* Even Addison's "Letters," (to whose style and "study" we are ordered by the once colossal dictator of literature—ponderous but not powerful—already a Hercules without his club—to "give up our days and nights,"—a false and despotic counsel! as if every age has not necessa-

rity of her own letters over those of her contemporaries, that she makes the following prophecy of their future success:—"The last pleasant work that fell in my way, was Madame de Sevigne's Letters: very pretty they are; but I assure you, without the least vanity, that mine will be full as interesting in forty years."

\* See Pope's love-letter to Lady M. W. Montagu, in which he talks of "Momus his project," and gets in, neck and shoulders, Herod and Herodias, Jupiter and Curtius, to show off his power of "wit and raillery," and prove the strength of his passion by the force of his learning. "Before Addison and Swift," says Walpole, "style was scarce aimed at even by our best authors."

rily its own style,' dependent upon the progress of society and the development of human intellect and science)—even Addison's “Letters,” cold, formal, and studied, are as devoid of originality as the travels of which they are supposed to be a journal;\* while Richardson's epistles to his literary ladies are tiresome as the homilies of his own “good Mrs. Norton.” Gay (and perhaps Arbuthnot sometimes) has alone given to his letters the charm of that exquisite simplicity, which was the characteristic feature of the talent of the English La Fontaine; and Sterne, whose letters, though witty and agreeable, are affected, came rather too late to be offered as an exception to the studied and pedantic style, which left England without a good letter-writer, while France justly boasted so many.

Good letter-writing is but good conversation carried on by the pen, a familiar talking upon paper, the intimate chit-chat or the fire-side on its travels by post, not invented solely for some “wretch's

\* Mr. Addison travelled through the poets, and not through Italy; for all his ideas are borrowed from descriptions, and not from the reality.”—*Correspondence of Horace Walpole*

aid," but resorted to by the fond and the feeling to cheat absence of its pang; or by the intellectual, and the social, "for the better carrying on" of that intercourse of mind and imagination, without which life is a blank; or by the gay, and the gossipping, for the circulation of those petty interests and every-day incidents and events, which, if important to none, are resources to all, which prevent time from stagnating, and which originate ideas, the lightness of which gives temporary relief from the great penalties of existence, deep thinking and deep feeling. The best letter, therefore, is that which makes the least demand upon the mind, and the most upon the fancy and the heart. He who writes to be studied, rarely writes to be read; he who writes to be admired, rarely writes to please. Ye Sevignés, and ye Ninons,\* to whom *l'esprit Rambouillet* was a source of perpetual ridicule, I invoke the careless spirit that

\* I allude here to Ninon's genuine letters, many of which are to be found scattered through the works of St. Evremond, and her supposed letters, addressed to the Marquis de Sévigné. "Les vraies lettres de Ninon," says a modern French critic, "étoient moins recherchées et plus délicates, quoique le tour en soit singulier et qu'elles soient remplies de morale et brillantes d'esprit."

pervades your delightful letters to attest the truth of the observation, and to bear witness in favour of the only letter-writer in the English language, who resembles or who rivals you ! The letters of Horace Walpole were written evidently *à trait de plume*,\* carelessly and playfully, and yet, like those of the goddess of his idolatry, they are eminently “*propres à faire connaître les mœurs, le ton, l'esprit, les usages de son temps*;” indeed he himself confesses, in one of his sketching details of the day, thrown off at a heat for the amusement of George Montague, and of his hero Harry Conway, (whose character and adventures, by the by, give a sort of epic interest to his correspondence) that he was “ collecting the follies of the age for the benefit of posterity.” He was in fact, and often unconsciously, the Dangeau of his times and class ; and in the course of his agreeable and epistolary gossiping, “ enshrined in amber” the ephemeral “flies” of fashion, the autocrats of high society, who, insignificant in themselves, illustrate by their

\* He says of his own letters :—“ I write more trifling letters than any man living ; am ashamed of them ; and yet they are expected of me.”

reigning manners and vices the history of the age in which they flourish, as “Kitcats” and “schemers,” the despots of Cornclis or Almack’s.\* He has also left some characters of men, whose names belong to history, finer and truer than history herself could delineate. The true secret of Horace Walpole’s unpopularity with a large class of professional and amateur literati, who deny his claims to that reputation which genius alone can give, is the unmitigated war, the *guerre à la mort*, which he waged, almost from the go-cart to the tomb, against all pretension, and against all unfounded and self-sufficient claims to distinction. He not only attacked those influential *bodies corporate*, who have obtained authority over public opinion, merely by assuming it,† but with daring scepticism, and

\* For the schemers see Lady M. W. Montagu’s letters. The following passage from one of Walpole’s letters contains a curious prediction of the future supremacy of Almack’s:—“Mrs. Cornelis, apprehending the future assembly at Almack’s, has enlarged her vast room, and hung it with blue satin, and another with yellow satin; but Almack’s room, which is to be ninety feet long, proposes to swallow up both hers as easily as Moses’s rod gobbled down those of the magicians.”

† See his admirable sketches of those “rags of a dishclout ministry,” which he has scattered through his letters; particularly the

mortal courage; he attacked the false gods of the popular worship of his day, set up by bad taste, or imposed on credulity by audacious talent.\* He attacked the cant of Warburton,† and the affectation of Rousseau. He attacked the buckram heroes and heroines of Richardson, when it was “religion to adore them,”‡ and declared Sir Charles a bore, and Clarissa a quiz! He attacked the authenticity of Ossian, when it was deemed heresy to doubt it. He attacked the most imposing historical fallacies, which ages had consecrated through party prejudice down to the present times. He attacked scientific pedantry in the “old lady’s logic,” and de-

Duke of Newcastle. See also his letters to, and various anecdotes of Lord Chatham.

\* “For my writings, they do not depend on venal authors, but on their own merits and demerits. It is from men of sense they must expect their sentence, not from boobies and hireling authors, whom I have always shunned, with the whole fry of minor wits, critics, and monthly censors.”—*H. Walpole's Correspondence*.

† “The turn-coat, hypocrite, infidel, Bishop Warburton.”—*Ibid.*

‡ “There are two more volumes come out of Sir Charles Grandison. I shall detain them till the last is published, and not think I postpone much of your pleasure. For my part, I stopped at the

: I was so tired of sets of people getting together and saying, ay, Miss, with whom are you in love? and of mighty good men, who convert your Mr. M.’s in the twinkling of a second.”—*Correspondence of H. Walpole*.

tected literary imposition in the person of Chatterton. He attacked those solemn and sentimental vices of high society, which were then beginning to make their way to England,—from the voluptuous bowers of the Medici, to the sober mansions of the stern and rigid English gentry: \* and lastly, and worst, the head and front of his offence, he attacked that loyalty which he himself terms “the loyalty to Kings in possession,”—he attacked its *alma mater*, Oxford, as a “nursery of bigotry and nonsense;” † and made war upon Toryism in its strongest hold—divine-righted prerogative, and

\* “On Wednesday we expect a third she-meteor. Those learned luminaries the Ladies Pomfret and W—— are to be joined by the Lady Mary Wortley Montagu. You have not been witness to the rhapsody of mystic nonsense which these two fair ones debate incessantly, and consequently cannot figure what must be the issue of this triple alliance; we have some idea of it. Only figure the coalition of prudery, debauchery, sentiment, history, Greek, Latin, French, Italian, and metaphysics, all except the second understood by halves, by quarters, or not at all. You shall have the journals of this notable academy.”—*Correspondence of H. Walpole*.

† “I was diverted with two relics of St. Charles the martyr: one, the pearl you see in his pictures, taken out of his ear after his foolish head was off; the other, the cup out of which he took his last sacrament. They should be given to that nursery of nonsense and bigotry, Oxford.”—*Ibid.*

royal infallibility and martyrdom.\* For such an assailant there could be *point de salut*, and there was none. The blockheads of pretension, more particularly, flew to arms,—a powerful body in all times, “*car l'empire des bêtes est un fait constaté dans l'histoire:*” and though two generations have nearly passed away since the first blow was struck, still the rancour of assuming mediocrity, wounded in its life-nerve, is a bequest that descends from generation to generation :

“*Et les envieux incurent, mais non pas l'envie.*”

### The leading trait of Walpole's intellectual tem-

\* “What foundation can there be for subjects devoting themselves to their prince, if he is bound by no reciprocal ties? If they are his chattels, his herd, his property, oaths are frivolous. He has power to punish them, if they revolt, whether they are sworn to him or not. To swear a king without reciprocity from him, is subjecting our souls to him, as well as our bodies. We are to be damned to all eternity, if he makes hi tyranny intolerable. Proclaim him God at once: God alone can be trusted with power over our minds: God alone can judge how much we can endure. The blindest bigot to the memory of Charles I. or James II. cannot deny that both were the original aggressors. Had they both acted conformably to the constitution and laws, no man living can think that any part of the nation would have revolted.”—*Life of Mr. Thomas Baker, by Horace Walpole.*

perament was evidently a quick and delicate perception of the truth of things, moral and material, in nature and art. The true and unerring tact, that innate endowment by which the ridiculous as well as the false (and the ridiculous is but an amusing set-off of the false) is always rapidly got at, lost nothing of its perfection by his education having been begun and finished in the closet of one of the shrewdest and cleverest ministers that England ever possessed. Shut up with old Sir Robert, *tête-à-tête*,\* he learned “to laugh at the madness of political ambition,” and discovered that “happiness did not depend on administration and victories.” In the galleries of Houghton, amidst the trophies of a palace, his early taste for the arts was developed, which testified its exquisite justness in the learned and clever preface, written almost

\* The following little anecdote is extremely illustrative of the tenor of the *tête-à-tête* conversations of the father and son, during the last two years that they spent together at Houghton. “In one of those summers, I forgot which, desirous of amusing him, which his ill health required, I promised to read to him. He said, ‘What will you read?’ I answered, as a young man would to a statesman, ‘History, Sir.’ ‘No, child,’ said he, ‘I know that cannot be true.’—*Detection of a Late Forgery by H. Walpole.*

in boyhood; to his “*Ædes Walpolianæ*.”\* It was there too he learnt “ what a monarch a man was, who wanted nothing ;”† and, governed by a conviction which would have best become a stoic, and by a taste and contempt which were evidently those of an epicurian, he settled down in early life an intellectual voluptuary, preferring enjoyment to fame, yet acquiring the latter, which he so well deserved, while simply occupied in pursuit of the former. So early as his return from Italy, and during his travels, his vocation to *virtù*, or “ *l'amour pour l'enquittaille*,” as Rabelais terms it, unequivocally declared itself; but his floating capital of taste, which was for a time devoted to the classic antique, properly so called, was soon thrown, for want of a

\* See also his sermon on painting, preached at Houghton, and the picturesque descriptions in his own letters, whilst on his travels in Italy. The following is quite a Salvator :—“ But the road west, the road ! winding round a prodigious mountain, and surrounded by others, all shagged with hanging woods, obscured with pines, or lost in clouds ! Below, a torrent, breaking through cliffs, and tumbling through fragments of rocks ! Sheets of cascades, forcing their silver speed down channelled precipices, and hastening into the roughened river at the bottom ! Now and then an old foot-bridge, with a broken rail, a leaning cross, a cottage, or the ruin of an hermitage.”—*Correspondence of Horace Walpole*.

† See his letters to Mr. Pitt, Lord Chatham.

“quick return” in England (where Roman antiquities are few and bad), into that fund, so rich and yielding in Great Britain, the antiquities of the middle ages. England then abounded in relics of the times of the Chaucers, the Spensers, the Sidneys, and the Shakspeares, relics then neglected and unappreciated. The “betweenity” which occurred in the interval when the charming Gothic had declined, and the Palladian had not crept in, was in every respect a Bœotian age. Then gardens were built, not planted; and the disciples of Kent, Brown, and Southcote, were still struggling through “clipt hedges and cockle-shell avenues:” while Sir William Temple’s “natural walls” and lead-covered grottos, were not yet quite out of fashion, and wildernesses were still composed of straight walks, and caverns were lined with looking-glasses.\* The furniture of aristocratic mansions was then half German, half French; cumbrous, not venerable—with all the inconveniences of the antique, without its picturesqueness. While ponderous stuffed chairs and china monsters filled the

\* “Pope has made a subterranean grotto, which he has furnished with looking-glasses.”—*Lady M. W. Montagu.*

apartments of the descendants of the worthies of Elizabeth's court, carvings by Gibbons, and portraits by Holbein, were consigned to lumber-rooms; beds embroidered by the Queen of Scots, and sweet-bags worked by her maids, were left to moulder, while a stiff-backed *bergère*, from some *miroitier's* shop in the Rue de Bac, or a china sconce from Sevres, brought any price. Such were the neglected treasures, which discovered themselves to the most ardent of antiquarians and collectors, in his various and delightfully recorded "pilgrimages to the holy lands of Gothic castles and abbeys," the hereditary seats of the Byrons, the Howards, the Seymours, the Russells, the Cavendishes, the Rutlands, the mansions of "Old Bess of Hardwicke,"\* and the palace-prisons of captive royalty.

\* See his most amusing description of Hardwicke:—"The next is her (Mary Queen of Scots) dressing-room, hung with patch-work on black velvet. Then her late bed-chamber. The bed has been rich beyond description, and now hangs in costly golden tatters. The hangings, part of which they say her Majesty worked, are composed of figures, large as life, sewed and embroidered on black velvet; white satin, &c., and represent the virtues that were necessary for her, or that she was forced to have, as Patience and Temperance, &c. The fire-screens are particular: pieces of yellow velvet, fringed with gold, hang on a cross bar of wood, which is fixed on the top of

It was in the low-roofed chambers, and nests of closets of M<sup>e</sup>nceaux, Haddon, Hatfield, Newstead,\* Althorpe, Hinchinbrook, and Chatsworth, that Walpole drew “deeper and deeper still” from the stream of antiquarianism, and was led to unearth those tangible records of past times, which fill up the blanks in history, with details of society, infinitely more interesting than any thing the scene-painting pencil of the historian can preserve: for it is curious to think what a *philosophie des mœurs* may be drawn from an inquiry into a china-closet, or an inquisition held on a lumber-room!—what epochs in commerce and manufactures may be fixed by the dimensions of a coffee-can, or by the fragments of a suit of hangings!—what traits of a single stick that rises from the foot. The only furniture which has any appearance of taste are the table and cabinets, which are all of oak, richly carved. There is a private chamber within, where she lay, her arms and style over the door. The arras hangs over all the doors. The gallery is sixty yards long, covered with bad tapestry, and wretched pictures of Mary herself, Elizabeth in a gown of sea-monsters,” &c. &c.—*Correspondence of Horace Walpole.*

\* “As I returned, I saw Newstead and Althorpe: the former is the very abbey. The great east window of the church remains, and connects with the house; the hall entire, the refectory entire, the cloister untouched, with the ancient cistern of the convent, and their arms on it; a private chapel, quite perfect.”—*Ibid.*

manners and morals may be furnished by hoops of whalebone and bodices of buckram, by the low-cut stomacher of a Cleveland, or the *négligé* of a Pompadour—and what lights and illustrations may be thrown on such works as Grammont, Pepys, and Evelyn, by the plunder of a Dowager Duchess's tall-boy, or the *exploitation* of the coffers and clothes-presses, the cupboards and dark-closets, in which the old mansions of old families always abound.

It was in such pictorial and historical mansions that Horace Walpole imbibed the desire of having a Gothic castle of his own ; and, with his imagination full of the proportions and traceries of Winchester, the fretted roofs of Netley, the cross-legged knights and the piked-horn dames, that started from tombs, or walked out of picture frames,\* he began to look out for a spot, where he might found a new school for old things, and arrange around him those objects so early associated in his mind,—relics, which the arts and history of ages had contributed to fill his crowded cabinet. He at last

\* He took the idea of the picture walking out of its frame in the “ Castle of Otranto,” from his own picture of Lord Falkland.

found a site whercon to place this long-built  
“castle in the air” of his antiquarian dreams ;  
but he neither sought nor found it amidst the  
romantic shades of Cumberland, nor the old feudal  
territory of Yorkshire ; he simply picked it up,  
accidentally, with other *bijoux*, at Mrs. Chenevix’s  
toy-shop, then the *petit Dunkirk* of London.  
His own account of the acquisition is too pleasant  
to need an apology for quoting it :—

“ You perceive by my date that I am got into  
a new camp, and have left my tub at Windsor. It  
is a little plaything house, that I got out of Mrs.  
Chenevix’s shop, and is the prettiest bauble you  
ever saw. It is set in enamelled meadows, with  
filigree hedges :

‘ A small Euphrates through the piece is roll’d,  
And little fishes wave their wings in gold.’

Two delightful roads, that you would call dusty,  
supply me continually with coaches and chaises :  
 barges, as solemn as Barons of the Exchequer, move  
under my window : Richmond Hill and Ham walks  
bound my prospect ; but, thank God ! the Thames  
is between me and the Duchess of Queensberry.

Dowagers as plenty as flounders inhabit all around ; and Pope's ghost is just now skimming under my window by a most poetical moonlight. I have about land enough to keep such a farm as Noah's, when he set up in the ark with a pair of each kind ; but my cottage is rather cleaner than I believe his was, after they had been cooped up together forty days. The Chenevices had tricked it out for themselves ; up two pair of stairs is what they call Mr. Chenevix's library, furnished with three maps, one shelf, a bust of Sir Isaac Newton, and a lame telescope without any glasses. Lord John Sackville predeceased me here, and instituted certain games called Cricketalia, which have been celebrated this very evening, in honour of him, in a neighbouring meadow. You will think I have removed my philosophy from Windsor, with my tea-things, hither ; for I am writing to you in all this tranquillity while a parliament is bursting about my ears."

The little tenement so playfully-described, had already a fine antique cast of character, and was rich in all the advantages of dark closets, and "passages that led to nothing." It had been built

in 1698, had been tenanted alternately by a profane comedian and a reverend divine—for there Talbot, Bishop of Durham, had written his Homilies, and Cibber his play of “The Refusal, or Lady’s Philosophy.” The site, too, abounded in agreeable associations, consonant to the habits and tastes of the elegant proprietor—the air still breathed of Pope, Swift, and Gay; the villas still bloomed where the witty Lady Mary, the charming Lady Hervey, and “Grammont’s daughter,”\* had recently resided. Still it must be owned, that, judged by modern ideas of the picturesque in villas, by the dictum of Price or Knight, “the capabilities” of Strawberry were few. It wanted space and prospect, and sometimes made its Gothic reformer sigh “with Chute, that Battel Abbey had not been to be sold at Mrs. Chenevix’s toy-

\* Lady Stafford. “Madame de Mirepoix told me t’other day, that she had known a daughter of the Countess of Grammont, an abbess in Lorrain, who, to the ambassadress’s great scandal, was ten times more vain of the blood of Hamilton than of an equal quantity of that of Grammont. She had told her much of her sister, my Lady Stafford, whom I remember to have seen when I was a child. She used to live at Twickenham when my Lady Mary Wortley, and the Duke of Wharton lived there; she had more wit than both of them.”—*Correspondence of Horace Walpole*.

shop, as Strawberry was." Yet its defects, such as they were, harmonized with the style of the old-English villa or country-house, whose high walls, deep moats, and dismal clipt hedges excluded all view but of their own dreariness. Even the narrow dusty avenues, and little green lanes, that led to Strawberry, both from Twickenham and the Thames, were all in keeping; for such were "the crack-skull roads" leading to the rural residences of the great, in former times—by-ways which obliged *La superbe Hamilton* and *La belle Muskerry* to mount their palfreys, and jog on behind their gentlemen ushers on pillions, when they left the court at Whitehall, to visit their friends in the country, or to participate in the gaieties of Newmarket and "the Wells."

Many Palladian palaces, even of a more recent day, were chosen with a view to security and shelter, rather than to taste and views. The spacious and splendid Iverworth, "though it had prospect, was built in the centre of a moat, sprinkled with little ponds." The shades of Berry, however, soon began to extend beyond their original five acres. The square-built

little toy-house swelled out more nearly to the dimensions of a feudal mansion, and was angled into cabinets, and rounded into towers, lengthened by galleries, and raised by battlements; and finally became the repertory of all those treasures that the taste, learning, and research of its owner could rescue from the depredations of time, and the neglect of tasteless and high-born ignorance.

“My collection” (says Walpole, in excuse for his passion for building and Gothicism) “is too great to be humbly lodged.” The castle, however, as now existing, did not raise its towers all of a sudden, like those of Bagatelle. It was reformed, at different times, by alterations and additions “to the old small house.” The library, and refectory, or great parlour, were entirely new-built in 1753; the gallery, round tower, great cloister, and cabinet, in 1760 and 1761; the north bed-chamber in 1770; and the Beauclerc tower, with the hexagon closet, in 1776.

The greatest hold over the imagination, the most powerful tie which time in its course lets fall upon the feelings and the mind, is that which comes of early associations; and even the book

read, the picture gazed on, in that epoch of life when all is seen decked in prismatic hues, are never forgotten, and are always over-rated in the fondness of old recollections. It happened that at such an epoch, Strawberry Hill and the "Walpoliana" were the picture and the book, to which the writer of this rapid sketch was indebted for some of those new and delightful impressions, which such objects are calculated to make on the young and the imaginative, to whom pictures and books are such novelties and such enjoyments ; and being then the resident of an Irish country-house, where a blind Irish harper was her *Magnus Apollo*, and the *fadaises* of Della Crusca her *ne plus ultra* of literary acquirement, Strawberry Hill and the "Walpoliana" became her Mecca and her Talmud. To visit Strawbrry Hill was a vow, made rather in devotion than in hope ; while to peruse the works of its master was a desire, which time, and an intimate acquaintance with their delightful pages, has rather sharpened than diminished. Years swept on, some feathered with bird of paradise wings, and others heavily and slowly, like the sailing flight of birds of less happy omen ; but

still they swept on : and scenes far more distant and sites far more remote than the “ show-box of Twickenham” were visited.

“ The Alps, the Apennines, and river Po,” and other lands and streams as classic, were traversed and navigated, till they had become as familiarized to the Irish wanderer’s mind as her own native Howth or Liffy,—the Tiber and Soracte of her national partiality in less travelled days ; and yet the vow to visit Strawberry, though not accomplished, was not forgotten, and it still held its place, while other vows had faded away, with the airy nothings of which they were the objects. The day, however, at last arrived,\* when Strawberry was visited, and with an interest as intense as the Vatican ever excited in the breast of some long-vowed pilgrim to St. Peter’s shrine. It was just such a day as the founder himself would have selected for “ showing off” to the “ Bedford court,” and “ Princess Emily,” or the “ De Boufflers and De Beaumonts,” when the noble host was wont to draw his bed-curtains, and ask

\* June 20th, 1825.

“ Harry if the sun shone ?”\* and beheld with a rapture he so pleasantly ridiculed himself (as indeed he did all his own peculiarities), that Strawberry was all “ green and gold.” Who ever has left England to visit the finest scenery in the finest climes, and returned to glide along the shores of the Thames on such a day (days in England “ few and far between,”) will scarcely hesitate to admit, what it is impossible not to feel, that, compared to those shores, there is nothing equal in beauty and richness in the river scenery of any other country in Europe. The pilgrimage to Strawberry was performed by water, in preference “ to one of those two delightful roads that might be called dusty ;” and the barge was anchored in one of those little creeks, where, after “ holding a chapter with Chute,” the antiquarian and his friend were wont to watch the arrival of the boat, which was “ freighted with old window-frames, old tombs, and old chairs, of the time of

\* “ Yesterday I gave a great breakfast at Strawberry Hill to the Bedford court. There was the Duke and Duchess, Lord Tavistock and ~~Lady~~ Caroline, my Lord and Lady Gower, Lady Caroline Egerton, &c. &c. The first thing I asked Harry was, ‘ Does the sun shine ?’—*Correspondence of H. Walpole.*

Edward the Sixth." A freight was expected with an interest as intense as any Antonio of the Rialto ever felt as he watched the entrance of "his argosic" into the Lagunas of Venice: for the passion, not the object, is the thing, and there is a fanaticism in collecting, which "none but collectors know," or can appreciate. From this little creek and its stepping-stone landing-place, a scrubby sort of a bank on one side, a high dull wall on the other, (but still a wall, "castellated after the manner of that which surrounded Aston House,") and some thirty or forty yards of a narrow rutted road, led to one of the gates of the castle, which, truth to tell, seemed from this point to be built like the towers of Monceaux, for the purpose of "seeing nothing at all." All around, the modern antique had the true characteristic feudal air of loneliness —the silence (though not the waste) which despotic power ever creates around it, and which the temporary absenteeism of the great lords of great mansions, even in England, so well represents in its effects. This, however, but deepened an illusion, which was soon dispelled by the appearance of the

*custode* of the castle, who replied to the tolling of the porter's bell :—no grim gruff porter of the olden times, with staff and scutcheon, and beard and belt, and buff coat and bluff air, but a smart, comely, *rondelette* little housekeeper, all frills and falbalas, welcomed our arrival, of which she had been previously forewarned,\* and playing with her keys, as the ladies in the Spectator played with their fans, alertly and civilly proceeded to do the honours of Strawberry—not a little surprised, from the first starting, to find that one of the sight-seers at least had a *catalogue raisonné* in her head, which superseded the necessity of any other, and who inquired for the “ Holbein chamber,” and the “ Star chamber,” and the “ Cabinet,” with a familiarity that astonished the housekeeper of Strawberry, full as much as the lord of Strawberry him-

\* The order, elegance, and neatness in which Strawberry Hill is kept, in the absence of its present noble owner, is only too perfect for antiquarian illusions. A little touch of the dreariness and desolation of an Irish absentee's “ place,” would leave nothing to lament on that subject; and the *virtuoso* visitor might then sing, with the poet of slovenly beauty, “ Such sweet neglect most pleaseth me.”

self, on a similar visit, surprised the housekeeper of Althorpe.\* On entering the north gate, (to those well read in the legends of Strawberry,) the “Abbot’s garden” may be at once recognised, to the right, parted off by an iron skreen-work. The “Abbot’s garden” has been often sneered at for its miniature dimensions, and, indeed, it is not much larger than an old lady’s flower-knot in Bloomsbury;† but it is quite as large as St. Francis’s garden in the magnificent abbey of Ancisa, and larger than the little garden allotted to the friars and monks of that spacious and beautiful monastery, the Certosa of Pavia. It is in strict keeping with the order of things it is meant to represent : some few and fine flowers were struggling through the crusted earth, covered with dust, probably the *dernier rejetton* of the “seeds from Sunbury,” sown by that hand, which, like them, is now itself but dust. The iron skreen, though so carelessly

\* “ In the gallery, I found myself quite at home, and surprised the housekeeper with my familiarity with the portraits.”—*Correspondence of Horace Walpole*.

† When Walpole visited Hinchingbrook, in the middle of the last century, he found the garden wondrous small, the park almost smaller, and no appearance of territory.

passed by the uninitiated as an old gate, is nevertheless a fine copy from the tomb of Roger Niger, Bishop of London, in old St. Paul's; even the common-looking blue and white china vase, in the adjoining little cloister, which looks like an old cracked foot-pail of a lady's dressing-room, has its interest, in being the vase on whose verge the "pensive Selina reclined," whose death is immortalized by the muse of Gray; and the half-defaced bas-relief head in marble, inserted in the wall, though modern sight-seers scarcely pause to look upon it, once rivetted the enamoured Tasso: it is the portrait of the object of his love and his misfortune, Eleanor D'Este. The hall of the castle is small and gloomy, paved with tiles, and lighted by arched painted-glass windows: its dimensions are in utter contradiction to the generally received ideas of Gothic halls, as taken from those described in the romances of Mrs. Radcliffe and her imitators; but Gothic apartments were not capacious. The royal chamber where the Queen of Scots took her last supper, was scarcely

\* The first stanza of this ode is written on the vase:

" 'Twas on this lofty vase's side," &c.

larger than a modern clothes-press ; and a hall sixty by forty, in one of the finest old castles in England, “was deemed so spacious that, like a Leviathan, it swallowed up all the other chambers.” Even “the great old gallery at Woburn” was but a “bad room, powdered with little stars ;” and low roofs, nests of closets, mural cabinets, and slips of galleries, were much more consonant to the manners of times when society only collected *en petits pelotons*, under the influence of friendship or fear. In modern days, on the contrary, every great mansion must have a room large enough, at least, to hold its five hundred select friends, and halls, for flambeaux and footmen, of proportionate dimensions.

On the left of the hall, (approached by a narrow passage, lighted by a painted glass window, with the arms of Queen Elizabeth, and the date 1567 carved in wood above it) is the Refectory, or “great parlour”—a great parlour thirty feet by twenty ! Still this great parlour (scarcely large enough to serve for a *salon-à-boîte* after dinner in a modern mansion) is

quite as large as the *salsas* of the old Lombardy castles, or as the *sals-à-manger* of the ancient châteaux of France. It has many interesting if not precious pictures; such as "the Conversation," by Reynolds, which represents the old library at Strawberry, and the group round the table in its centre, consisting of the witty George Selwyn, Lord Edgecomb, and Mr. Williams; the second Lady Walpole (the Moll Skerrett of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu), as a shepherdess, and a group of the Waldegrave beauties. Here, too, beakers of Indian porcelain, pails of Chelsea china, and vases of Roman *faïence* mingle their remote epochs in amicable confusion, against all rule and chronological *virtù*; while skreens, worked and embroidered by celebrated coronetted beauties, (though interesting to the noble owner, to whom so many of such tributes were presented) now only look like the rubbish furnished from the looms of the Minervas of a Paddington boarding-school to the parlours of their parents in Lincoln's Inn Fields. The ancient bellows and altar candlestick of the ante-room, have their own charms for the antiquarian, as Dry-

den's head and Cibber's bust\* possess for the dramatic amateur. The china closet, at the first glimpse, looks like any body's china-closet, and, to the unlearned, is neither striking nor interesting; but to those who can trace in its little ceiling the roof of the pretty room at the Borghese Villa at Frescati, or a chimney-piece copied from an old window at the ancient seat of the Grimstones (Broadfield Hall, in Essex), it is not unimportant. Regiments of Worcester china bowls, phalanxes of Sevres mustard-pots, with cups, and dishes, and narrow-necked bottles, and wide-mouthed ewers, and mugs, and jugs, of no very striking appearance, are turned from with a sneer, by those who know not the history of this frail but venerable collection. But when cups have been painted by Pietro Cortona, and plates by Raffael, and dishes by Giulio Romano; when green-glass bottles turn out to be Roman lacrymatories, and a china figure to be Michael Angelo's Bacchus, then the China-closet becomes a precious museum: and one regrets that its dimmed stained-glass windows do not throw more

\* Colley Cibber gave this bust to Mrs. Clive, Lord Orford's fair friend—another equivocal Stella.

light upon treasures consecrated alike by the hand of time and of genius. The Yellow bed-chamber would be simply a yellow bed-chamber (an unbecoming colour, *par parenthèse*, for a “sleeping beauty,” if a brunette, who should always choose *couleur de rose*,) but for its pictures; among which those always amusing portraits (*pour le moins*) of the heroes and heroines of the Grammont memoirs, long detain spectators, who, like Walpole, and the writer of this sketch, have “the Grammont madness upon them.”\* The principal of these worthies is that modernly white-washed insolvent in morals, Charles the Second himself, with some half dozen of his own and his brother’s sultanas, the Sedley, the Richmond, the Portsmouth, the Cleveland, the Churchill, and “Mistress Philadelphia Saunders.” This group, nineteen in number, (Sacharissa excepted) made a part of the collection of Jervas, the friend and laureate-painter of Pope.

The Breakfast-parlour, with its hangings of blue and white paper, and its draperies of blue and white linen, has, according to the sumptuousness

\* A phrase of Horace Walpole.

of modern furniture, a very ordinary appearance. But when its interesting miniatures catch the eye, its “Venitia, Lady Digby, that extraordinary beauty of an extraordinary fame,” its Mary Lepell (Lady Hervey), its *belle des belles* (the Duchess de Montbazon), and its Princess Palatine (of Madame de Sévigné’s letters), its unfortunate Earl of Essex, and its heroic Charlotte de la Trémouille, with a score of other historical heads; then the little blue and white breakfast-room is lingered in with pleasure, and left with regret, even for the green closet, with its multitude of curious pictures, or for the great armoury, whose chief relic is the suit of mail worn by the great Earl of Warwick, when he marched upon Westminster-hall, in that happy epoch when parliaments were to be awed by a man in armour, and laws submitted to spears and quivers—the good old times!

The Library has all the antique caste and sombre colouring of a private room (once called closet) of the great men, and the studious ones of the middle ages. The books are ranged in pierced Gothic arches; the chimney-piece a tomb from Westminster Abbey; and shields, arms, and lozenges, fill

up every corner. The pictures are curious and historical, and the fine old silver-gilt clock, the gift of Henry the Eighth to Anna Boleyn, presents a piece of ponderous gallantry, very different from the *bijou* of *or moulu* (often a poem in design, a picture in combination) which a modern *merveilleux* offers to the object of his lukewarm devotions, showy and light as the times it represents, and the hours of her whose actions it does *not* govern. Among the rare books in the splendid collection of this fine library, “The Book of the French Portraits in the Time of Francis the First,” which belonged to Brantome, who has written in the precious pages, in his own precious autograph, the names of many of the originals of the pictures, is the book !

The Star-Chamber ! with its horrible name of fearful associations (the boudoir of the Stuarts, where, alas, their subjects *boudoient beaucoup*)—the Star-Chamber of Strawberry is only an innocent little room, with green walls powdered with little stars, like a modern French paper. Its treasures consist of a fine collection of medals, and it leads by a “trunked aisle” passage to the Holbein Chamber, which looks like a pet-room of Catherine

of Arragon ; small, gloomy, and magnificent, with chairs from Glastonbury Abbey, and the red hat of her great enemy Wolsey, lying beside that royal-looking bed, whose velvet hangings and waving plumes put one in mind of the restless nights and uneasy dreams which the crowned heads who slept on such couches were wont to endure, when the heads themselves were never very sure upon the shoulders of the despots who bore them. There are too few pictures of the “great original” whose name gives interest to this room to entitle it to such a distinction ; what there are, however, are fine, and all the historical pictures are curious and interesting.

The Gallery, long and narrow, in spite of its ceiling from Henry the Eighth's Chapel, will remind the Italian traveller of the gallery in the royal palace at Turin. Its hangings of crimson damask have no better effect than the crimson damask paper of the present day. It has doors from the Abbey at St. Albans, and recesses from the tomb of Archbishop Bourchier at Canterbury, and yet it is a light, splendid, and cheerful apartment. Its pictures, busts, &c. would

fill a tolerably sized catalogue ; and besides “ Mrs. Keppel in white,” and “ Lady Dysart in pink,” and a hundred other such rainbow-dressed “ Cynthias of the minute,”\* there are a number of the works of the best masters, particularly of Zuccherino, Vandyke, Jansen, Poussin, &c. ; but here, as in the whole collection, the pictures are more interesting as historical portraits, than rare or valuable as paintings, and many of them would curl the critical nose of the modern virtuosi, who, having posted through Italy, return to buy Rembrandts and Raphaels, manufactured for the markets at Amsterdam or the fairs of Leipsic.

The Round Room, which leads to the *sanctum sanctorum* of the edifice, (the Tribune,) is not to be passed through with careless glance or rapid step, like an ordinary antechamber. It has the merit of all the apartments of Strawberry, in

\* Among these, and far superior to them all in grace and loveliness, is the picture, by Sir J. Reynolds, of Maria; second daughter of Sir Edward Walpole, widow of James Earl of Waldegrave, and wife of William Henry, Duke of Gloucester, brother of King George the Third. Walpole’s own portrait of this favourite niece, on her wedding-day, (in a letter to his friend G. Montague,) is equally lovely.

offering an ample study to the antiquarian, or to the curious in the economy of furniture. Its chairs of Aubusson tapestry, its chimney-piece from the tomb of Edward the Confessor, its ceiling from old St. Paul's, and surbases from the monument of Queen Eleanor in Westminster Abbey, have each their specific merit and interest; while the wreck of Lady Betty Germaine's collection, and the plunder of Penshurst (from the apartments of Sidney "and Sidney's sister") have contributed largely to enrich and adorn it, and to awaken pleasant associations by its inspection. From the former, are the silver chenets, vases, and sconces, which ornament the chimney-piece; from the latter is the fine portrait, by Vandyke, of Lady Dorothy Percy, Countess of Carlisle, and others.

Over the door is a most characteristic picture of Vandyke's celebrated love, "Mistress Lemon," painted *con amore* by the enamoured artist; she represents Judith, and brandishes a sword, but

" There lurks more peril in those eyes,  
Than twenty of such swords."

Here, too, is Salvator Rosa's fine\* picture of Jacob travelling from Laban. Whatever was consecrated by the pencil of that great master was precious to the lord of Strawberry, who first acquired a knowledge and professed an adoration of his genius, while yet a boy, in the gallery of his own paternal<sup>\*</sup> Houghton.<sup>†</sup> When Lord Or-

\* I have mentioned this fine picture in the catalogue of Salvator Rosa's works now in England. But I had not then seen it; nor was I then aware how enthusiastic an admirer of Salvator Lord Orford was, until I recently read his admirable introduction to the "Ædes Walpolianæ." In the passage I allude to, he observes,— "The greatest genius Naples ever produced resided generally at Rome—a genius equal to any that city itself ever bore. This was the great Salvator Rosa! His thoughts, his expression, his landscape, his knowledge of the force of shade, and his masterly management of horror and distress, have placed him in the first class of painters. In Lord Townscnd's 'Belisarius' one sees a majesty of thought equal to Raphael, an expression great as Poussin's. In Lord Orford's 'Prodigal' is represented the extremity of misery and low nature, not foul and burlesque, like Michel Angelo Caravaggio's, nor minute, circumstantial, and laborious, like the Dutch painters. Salvator Rosa was a poet and a satirist. Here again was a union of those arts: his pictures contain the genius and true end of satire, though, heightened and expressive as his pictures are, they still mean more than they speak. Pliny describes Salvator in 'Timanthes':—In omnibus ejus operibus intelligitur plus semper quam pingitur," &c.

† One of the most beautiful and tender pieces of epistolary remi-

ford designed his tribune, he doubtless had the tribune of the Imperial Gallery at Florence in his head. The tribune at Strawberry is, however, of a less simple form. It is a square, with semi-circular recesses in the middle of each side, difficult to describe, but very effective to look at; its sober stone-coloured walls are admirably relieved by its rich gold ornaments, and other splendid decorations of every kind, and every age in the history of the arts. The beautiful Gothic architecture of St. Albans has furnished the models for its windows and niches; and its finely-fretted roof, borrowed from the Chapter-house at York, is terminated by a star of yellow glass, which throws a sort of Claude Lorraine tint over the whole precious apartment. Amidst a number of fine antique busts and statues, is raised a simple Gothic altar of black and gold; it is the tomb of the children of Edward the Third in Westminster Abbey, and its slab of black marble is

niscences that ever was written, is Horace Walpole's letter, dated from Houghton, 1761, after fifteen years' absence, and beginning, "Here I am at Houghton—alone," &c.—*Correspondence*, vol. ii. p. 226.

covered with precious relics and *objets d'art* of every time and description, silver filigree dishes, vases of amethyst, and sconces of agate, with carved ivory by Verskovis; while a cabinet of rose-wood, with panels and sculpture by Germaine of Paris, curiously carved, rises above it, and contains one of the finest collections of enamels and miniatures perhaps in England: some are by Lens, Carlo Dolce, Boit, Zink, Groth, Isaac Oliver,\* Petitot, Liotard, &c.;—many are original portraits of the historical characters they re-

\* In no other collection is to be seen in any good preservation any number of the works of Isaac and Peter Oliver. I forget whether Raphael's exquisite missal, with its unique miniatures, is in this cabinet or in the library.

Among the curious enamels is one of Charles the Second. It is in an old enamelled blue case, and is said to be one which he gave when in Holland to a young lady, to whom he stood godfather. In her extreme old age she sold it. There is another fine miniature of James the Second, when Duke of York, which is remarkable as being purchased at the sal of Mrs. Danet, daughter to his handsome bold-looking mistress, Mrs. Godfrey, of whom there is also a miniature by Petitot. The most interesting among the historical miniatures of this fine collection are, the clever Queen of Bohemia, the most gifted of all the Stuarts; Charles the First, by Petitot; Robert Cecil, Earl of Salisbury, by Isaac Oliver; and Sir Anthony Shirley, in a dress half English, half Persian, done when he was ambassador from the Sophy of Persia.

present, and others are fine copies from Luca Giordano, Vanloo, and Holbein; some set in the exquisitely little carved frames of Lejarée, and others mounted in brilliants or precious stones. Here, in the immortal bloom of enamel, still smiles the coarse but beautiful Cleveland, the intriguing but *piquante* Portsmouth, "Mistress Godfrey, of the York seraglio," and the lovely Countess d'Olonne (one of the heroines of De Retz's Memoirs) who had a seraglio of her own, though she is here represented as Diana. Here, too, leers and lours the royal *petit-maître* of despotism, as he was wont to do at Versailles, in the midst of profligate mistresses and slavish courtiers — Louis the Fourteenth, surrounded by De Fontanges, De la Vallière, *et tutte quante*; while the wives of England's Blue Beard are to be found with all their heads on; and the lovely Madame Mazarin, looking as if she had just escaped from St. Evremont's letters, accounts for the passion of the enamoured philosopher, in loveliness far more bewitching than regular. Vases, cups, and chalices, in gems, jewels, and chrystals, the great seals of great kings, and the pretty *bioux* of great.

ladies, fill up this beautiful *répertoire* of all that is precious and curious, with rings to satisfy an alderman's wife, and snuff-boxes in number and beauty à faire crever d'envie Beau B, or Lord P; while vessels of wrought silver, and cups scooped out of amethysts, or set with brilliants, recall the treasures of the *guarda roba* of the Medici, when Benvenuto Cellini worked for their amusement, and had (as it sometimes fares with talent patronized by grandeur) his labour for his pains. Pictures,\* lamps, and bronzes, fill up every part of this interesting room, and one leaves it with dazzled eyes, and sated curiosity, by the sombre little passage and small closet adjoining, (full to stuffing, like every other part of the edifice, with objects of curiosity or of art) for that great north bed-chamber, where the readers of French memoirs, and the adorers of Grammont, (or rather of Antoine Hamilton,) may feast their eyes and associations to satiety. The Great North

\* Among these the most striking are the Temptation of St. Anthony, by Teniers. Soldiers at Cards, by Vandyke. His own Head, by Himself, and a portrait of Frances Howard, the celebrated Countess of Essex, by Isaac Oliver.

Bed-chamber, considered as a bed-chamber, is *en grande tenue*, according to the old style of magnificence; its royal canopied bed is plumed with ostrich feathers, and hung with rich tapestry of Aubusson, surrounded by a carpet of curious needle-work, and flanked by chairs of ebony and gold, too heavy to move, and too fine to sit in. Its crimsoned damask walls are covered with the most precious portraits. Over the chimney is a great picture of Henry the Eighth, and his children,\* and a bust of Francis the Second, the boy-husband of the unfortunate Queen of Scots. Immediately opposite to the bed stands that figure, which occasioned so many sleepless nights to the *gallants* of Whitehall, “La belle Jennings,” afterwards Duchess of Tyrconnel, whose *bon mot* to James the Second, when, as Lady Lieutenant, she received him at the Castle of Dublin, shows her not to have been of the order of stupid beauties, or like Mademoiselle Stuart, *aussi bête que belle*; her friend, Mademoiselle Hamilton, (Countess de Grammont,) is placed near her. There is also in this chamber an

\* See a description of this piece in “The Anecdotes of Painting.”

admirable group, the rehearsal of an opera, with the famous Mis<sup>t</sup>. Toft, the *prima donna* of her day, at the harpsichord. Its *pendant* is a scene from the “Beggar’s Opera,” by Hogarth, with portraits of the original performers.\* The charming portraits of Ninon de l’Enclos,† Hortense Mancini, and Madame de Maintenon, long detain the attention, even from the wonders of the “glass closet,” where a silver perfume box, by Benvenuto Cellini, wedding-gloves of the patriot Hampden’s bride, and the trunked ones of King James, with Von Trump’s tobacco-box, and “a silver-gilt apostle spoon,” belonging to Lord knows who, offer a curious and heterogeneous variety, and mark the successful and arduous researches of the collector after all that was rare and old. The Beauclerc closet, dedicated to the elegant works of the accomplished Lady Diana Beauclerc, the

\* Among these is Miss Fenton (afterwards Duchess of Bolton) as Polly.

† It is of this picture that Walpole says, “You see Ninon tries to look charming, and she only looks tipsy.” The tradition of this picture is, that Ninon herself gave it to Lady Sandwich, daughter of Wilmot, Earl of Rochester; her grandson (Miss Rae’s Lord Sandwich,) gave it to Horace Walpole.

round bed-room, and the great cloister, follow in sight-seeing succession, and each has its separate interest and character. In the second are some fine portraits, and many very pleasing ones : among the latter may be reckoned the portraits of Lady Suffolk, the mistress *titré* of George the Second, Mrs. Barry and Mrs. Clive, the tragic and comic muses of their time ;— there is also a fine head of Oliver Cromwell's mother. But the Round Bed-room is to Strawberry, what Naples is to the rest of Italy, the *ne plus ultra* of curiosity : attention is exhausted, eyes are dazzled, and expectation satiated by the time it is reached ;\* and it is with a pleasure unspeakable, that one passes through the great cloister, into the refreshing grounds and gardens, without even stopping to examine those gate-piers, which are taken from the tomb of William de Luda in the cathedral of Ely.

\* I really forget in what order of seeing we visited a handsome modernly-furnished saloon, in which the most interesting object is a fine, full-length and very beautiful portrait of the present noble lady of the castle, the Countess of Waldegrave. I think our cicerone told us it was by Sir William Beechey. Both as a portrait and a painting, it may stand the test with any of the Lely and Kneller beauties in the adjoining rooms.

The Shell Seat, at the end of the pretty winding shaded walk, which is within view of the Gothic chapel, offers a *bel riposo* after the fatigue which pleasure ever imposes. This shell seat is a very curious carving in oak, designed by the celebrated Bentley. The shell is a *chama*. Here the three Graces of the Paphos of Strawberry,\* were wont to repose, to the delight of their flattered and elegant host, who saw even his friends with the eye of an artist. There is but little in the grounds of Strawberry to detain the steps of the visitor, except its beautiful little Chapel in the garden: an edifice of as true Gothic taste and design, as its being copied, *à la rigueur*, from par-

\* "Strawberry Hill is grown a perfect Paphos—it is the land of beauties. On Wednesday the Duchesses of Hamilton and Richmond, and Lady Ailesbury, dined there, and the two latter stayed all night. There never was so pretty a sight as to see them all three sitting in the shell. A thousand years hence, when I begin to grow old, if that can ever be, I shall talk of that event, and tell young people how much handsomer the women of my time were, than they will be then. I shall say, Women alter now; I remember Lady Ailesbury looking handsomer than her daughter, the Duchess of Richmond, as they were sitting in the shell on my terrace with the Duchess of Hamil on, one of the famous Gunnings! Yesterday, t'other more famous Gunning, Lady Coventry, dined there!"  
*Correspondence of Horace Walpole*, vol. ii.

ticular parts of the Cathedral of Salisbury, and the Abbey of St. Edmundsbury; can make it. The interior has all the character of the cells or oratories appertaining to churches or monasteries in Catholic countries:—its altar-piece and altar-picture are curious from their antiquity; the beautiful windows of painted glass are emblazoned with saints and arms and the effigies of kings and queens; a superb shrine faces the door of entrance. In the front stands a superb crucifix, inlaid with mother-of-pearl; on either side, a King of France, and the Virgin Mary, in bronze and *faience*, stand upon consoles. The story of the marvellous “trasferimento” of this “holy house” is thus told on a tablet over the door. “The shrine in front was brought, in the year 1768, from the church of Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome, when the new pavement was laid there. This shrine was erected in the year 1256, over the bodies of the holy martyrs, Simplicius, Faustina, and Beatrix, by John James Capoccio and Vinia his wife; and was the work of Peter Cavalini, who made the tomb of Edward the Confessor in Westminster Abbey.”

Such is Strawberry, the cabinet, the toy, the retreat of the gifted son of a great minister, whose talents, intellect, and observation, well fitted him to run the career of his ambitious father: and who, had he been an ambitious or an interested man, had eminent opportunities of indulging either passion to their fullest extent. "I am unambitious, I am disinterested, but I am vain," observes Mr. Walpole, in a letter to Lord Chatham. Into this frankly acknowledged foible, Strawberry Hill, and its precious collection, entered largely; but the vanity of possessing and showing off this monument of his taste, and knowledge, and industry, and the objects of art they had gathered round him, did not blind Mr. Walpole to the incongruities of the whole, nor to the objections which the pedantry of *archi-virtu* and the cant of criticism would eventually level at the *hochet* of one, who had shown so little mercy to the unfounded pretensions and presumptuous mediocrity of that numerically powerful body, in all communities, whose claims to distinction are unsupported by those endowments which should alone command it:—

“ In a house, affecting not only obsolete architecture, but pretending to an observance of the custom even in the furniture, the mixture of modern portraits and French porcelaine, and Greek and Roman sculpture, may seem heterogeneous. In truth, I did not mean to make my home so gothic as to exclude convenience and modern luxury. But I do not mean to defend, by argument, a small capricious house. It was built to please my own taste, and realize my own visions. Could I describe the gay but tranquil scene where it stands, and add the beauty of the landscape to the romantic cast of the mansion, it would raise more pleasing sensations than a dry list of curiosities can excite: at least the prospect would recal the good humour of those who might be disposed to condemn the fantastic fabric, and to think it a very proper habitation—as it was the scene that inspired—the author of ‘The Castle of Otranto!’”

## ARTS AND ARTISTS.

I NEVER raise my head from my writing-desk and look around me, without being struck by the conviction, that though our inferiors may admire, and our superiors notice us, for some quality of intellect which has contributed to their ease, or their amusement, it is by our equals only, or those who have pursued the same objects by the same efforts, (in various degrees) that we are truly appreciated. The apartment in which I usually scribble, is a little repository of precious objects, offered by those, who, like myself (but in a far more eminent and successful career) have owed their celebrity to their own efforts and genius. There are few eminent artists in Europe whom I have numbered on the list of my personal friends, to whom I do not stand indebted for some gracious and generous offering of good will and esteem : and who in return for the idle hour's amusement afforded them by some trifling production of mine, have not

repaid me twenty times over, by works of art or literature, which mark their feeling to merit (real or supposed), and are monuments of their own superior abilities : Canova, Denon, Gerard, Robert Le Fevre, David, Lawrence, Cosway, Berthon, Bartolini, Raphael Morghen, Mayer, Stroeling, Davis, Turnerelli, Bate, Behnes, and many other younger friends,\* who have already given their

\* The arts are now making a struggling effort in Ireland, where there is no want of genius, though great want of all means of rendering it available. The commodity is there ; but where is the market ? Two young artists of distinguished merit, the pupils of the school of sculpture in the Dublin Institution, are now I believe studying with their distinguished countryman Behnes, and have produced two original compositions of considerable talent. Their names are Panormo and Gallagher. Of the young artists, with whom I am personally acquainted, Mr. Lover, as a miniature painter, and Mr. Mulrennan, as a faithful and exquisite copyist of the old masters, only want a fair field, both of study and encouragement, to become distinguished in the art to which they are devoted. But though Ireland has given birth to some of the most eminent artists of the British school, to Jarvis, Bindon, Roberts, Robertson, Hamilton, Barret, Shea, Barry, Ashworth, Comerford, Smith, Kirk, &c. &c., still it can never be the country of the arts. It may produce artists for other markets ; it will never have a mart of its own. In the present state of the country, I would rather bind my son apprentice to the meanest mechanical trade, than see him devote his time, talent, and energy, to the arts in the service of a nation, where excellence can only tend to generate disappointed ambition and indignant and ineffectual regret.

promise to posterity, though yet unknown to that fame, which can only come through time and industry, the true and best friends of even the highest genius.

Such are *the great*, to whom alone talent should stand indebted; and these are glorious times, when patronage is reduced to a party given and returned by the man of rank to the man of letters; and when the mutually exchanged rites of hospitality, replace the literary dependance of the Spencers and the Savages, or the insolent protection of the Medici and D'Este.

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“NO ONE A PROPHET IN HIS OWN COUNTRY.”

AN immensity has been written on absenteeism, (I have written a volume on it myself,) yet it remains pretty much where it was. Every body sees and feels, (at least every body who resides in Ireland does so,) that the absence of the rich proprietors of the soil works misery for the country which endures it. Yet Macculloch's logic is very close, if not very convincing. Under these circumstances, argument will do nothing. The deficiency is in facts. The whole data for arriving at a satisfactory conclusion have not yet been obtained ; and one observation or experiment, judiciously conducted, is worth an hundred *ergos*. Let Mr. Macculloch, therefore, come and pay us a visit, somewhat longer than the few days he bestowed upon us at his last *avatar*, and his truly national perspicacity will not long remain at fault. Let me take this opportunity of recommending

Ireland “to all and every one whom it may concern,” as one of the richest *cadavres* that ever offered itself to the inspection of the morbid anatomist,—one of the best furnished laboratories for political analysis. No where will the suckling statesman and political economist find a richer harvest of elementary instruction, in all that it is necessary for a legislator and a citizen to avoid.

Without, however, pausing to consider what are the effects of absenteeism on the country, it may be worth while to inquire what are its consequences on the individual himself,—a theme of some importance, that has but seldom been touched upon. It is ordinarily, and in some degree justly, said, that the absentee loses immeasurably by expatriation. Unquestionably the person who derives all his importance and consequence from the possession of “lands and beeves,” will sink into the class of non-proprietors, in a foreign country; and with all his expenditure, will find it very difficult to impress on his continental acquaintance a proper respect for his title-deeds and his manors. I remember a noble lord, who held a high office in the British revenue, being much

surprised, and more mortified, by finding that his official dignity procured him neither respect nor forbearance from the administrators of the French Douane. The same must pretty generally be the case with our travelling Justice Shallows, who, however capable of committing themselves, can commit no body else, beyond the boundaries of their own county. The case, however, is something different with those whose qualifications are more personal, and whose titles to esteem may be transplanted more readily than the family oaks. Man is no where an apostle in his own country ; but the proverb is only true, in all its intensity, in Ireland. In a country where every one is morbidly desirous of distinction, and where the master caste has so long been every thing, personal qualities are disregarded by the privileged few, and are objects only of jealousy and dislike with the degraded many. In Ireland, there is as little affection for merit, as there is market ; nor could it possibly be otherwisc, in a country so governed as Ireland has been. It is not so much the fault, as the misfortune of the people ; but whether fault or misfortune, it is a very good reason for render-

ing absentees every individual who feels within himself the desire for personal consideration, and the talent to command it by other means than “taking the trouble,” as Figaro says, “to be born to an estate.” It is not alone that such is the disposition of the public in Ireland. Were it a theatre as well disposed to reward and appreciate great endowments, as it is precisely the contrary, it would still be too limited in extent, to afford that exciting and intoxicating approbation, which rewards the labours of genius in other and happier countries.

To those who have established claims on the public, or have been fortunate enough to captivate its good will, absenteeism from Ireland is almost a duty to self; and nearly all the eminent individuals, born and educated in that country, have thought themselves justified in leaving it. Swift himself, the patriot *par excellence* among Irish literary characters, was a resident in his own land from necessity; and the sense of that necessity pressed for ever on his mind, embittering his latter days, and discolouring all views, if it were not among the immediate

causes of his deplorable insanity. For my own part, small as are my claims on public attention, I have every reason, perhaps, to be satisfied with whatever portion of esteem I may in any country be honoured with ; but in all things there are degrees, and it is not vanity to feel and to appreciate the superior kindness of strangers, and to be sensible to distinctions, of which the worthiest and the wisest might be proud.

Upon the score of pleasure also, the absentee, it must be allowed, has a decided advantage. Divided and distracted by parties, a prey to constant turbulence, and to frequent insurrections, Ireland could never have offered much attraction, to stay the foot of the absentee. In the best times, the pleasures of the Irish capital were derived more from the hilarity and social temperament of the people, than from the physical resources of refined and enlightened amusement. Since the union, even these have " made themselves air, into which they vanished ;" and the transfer of the Irish legislature to London, and the importation of British methodism to Dublin, have left the latter city nothing but a short and fitful season of balls and

assemblies. All public places of amusement have closed, or have dwindled into insignificance and neglect; and however much it may be lamented, it cannot be wondered, that those who are masters of their own time, and have wealth at their disposal, should *promener leur ennui ailleurs*, and seek in foreign countries for those agreeable sensations and exciting pleasures which are not to be found at home.

To the student, the artist, and the philosopher, the resources of Ireland are still more limited. The libraries and collections which draw this class of persons to the greater capitals of Europe, are wholly wanting; nor is there a sufficiency of congenial talent to make society, to excite emulation, and encourage zeal. The Irish gentleman, who has been blessed or cursed with a superior education and a refined taste, is compelled to emigrate, or to mortify and place in abeyance his natural impulses. It is not, therefore, so much a matter of reproach to the absentee, as of praise and admiration to him, who from patriotism, devotes his time and his faculties to his own country, that the one resides in foreign countries, and the other at

home. It is idle and vain to talk of duties, and to insist that the holders of estates are bound by their tenure to stand by the country that feeds them. Duties are only respected as far as they carry with them their own reward ; and a nation has no right to claim the residence of its proprietors, if it will not, or cannot, cultivate the arts of peace, and make that residence desirable in itself. Whenever the misfortunes of Ireland have become matter of legislative discussion, British statesmen have coolly turned round upon the friends of that country and reproached them with its absenteeism, as if that were the sole and exclusive cause of all that it has suffered, and all that it must still continue to suffer. But, if even this were the truth, to whom does Ireland owe this plague spot in her social condition ? I speak it not in anger, or in a spirit of wanton reproach, but the cause of all this calamity is to be found in antecedents, of which the policy of England is the first link. Long and persevering acts of national benevolence and of legislative wisdom are requisite, to do away the fatal injury of her proconsular regime, and to

wipe away the stain which her character has acquired, through her wanton neglect and wilful destruction of the resources of Ireland.

## PATRICK'S DAY.

“St. Patrick was a jontlemon,  
And came of dacent people.”

IRISH SONG.

I WAS awakened this morning at daylight by the cry under my windows, of “Green shamrock, fine shamrock ;” and the cry has been repeated as incessantly and as annoyingly the whole day, as that of “hot cross buns” is in London on a Good Friday. The Irish, by the bye, with all their catholicism, do not eat cross buns; which is as exclusively a protestant, as it is a cockney fashion of idolatry.

The national festival in Ireland, with the supremacy of the saint, to whom it is dedicated, is still maintained with unabated devotion and conviviality throughout the kingdom, from the castle to the

cabin. For a week before it arrives, the beggars wish you “many happy Patrick's days;” Patrick's crosses are sold in every street; every field in the vicinity of the metropolis is crowded with searchers after “green shamrocks;” and the dealers in this national emblem (most appropriate to a people accustomed to be trodden on) carry on a bustling and a thriving trade, till the whole population comes forth like “Birnham wood to Dunsinane's high hill.” From the lowest mendicant to the lord lieutenant,\* all are supplied with shamrocks. Not only “bishops, priests, and deacons,” of the church, as by law established, decorate their consecrated persons with the venerable emblem of a catholic saint; but the law itself, and its great conservators, “prank it in green,” like the “merry

\* Their Graces the Duke and Duchess of Northumberland, though in the noviciate of their Irish Regency, had the condescension to appear, this day (March 17th, 1829) at the windows of the state apartments of the castle, with large shamrocks decorating their persons; while hundreds of the common people danced in the court beneath, to the enlivening air of Patrick's Day, played by the band of the guard.

“Chi ben principia ha il mezzo del opra.”

men" of Sherwood forest. From the protestant keeper of the king's conscience to the papistical attorney, who has no conscience to keep, all are adorned, though not distinguished by the shamrock.

As soon as the domestic day begins, and breakfast is announced, the head servant in every house makes his appearance with a salver of shamrocks, each tied up into a *bouquet*, presenting one to each of the family, and usually receiving a *buona mano*, "to drown his shamrock in St. Patrick's pot." The fumes of whiskey punch, the proper libation to the patron saint, arise from every kitchen and servants' hall, throughout the country; and the court ball given at the Castle of Dublin, in that noble temple dedicated at once to the saint, and to Terpsichore, St. Patrick's hall, surpasses in numbers and in splendour even the like celebration of the king's birthday. Feathers wave, lappets flutter, diamonds sparkle; and the red bench still presents the descendants of the Geraldines, the De Burgos, and the Brien Borrus, with six hundred years' nobility at their backs, upholding the patron

saint of their ancient dynasties, in the very face of the protestant church, and of the constitution of 1688.

When all are seated, (and what an amphitheatre of beauty presents itself to the eye of the lucky stranger, who chances to visit the Irish court on a Patrick's day,) and when the vice-regal procession has passed up the centre of the hall, and the representatives of majesty have taken their seats on the throne, once consecrated by the august person of majesty itself; then the national air is struck up with an enlivening influence, to which even Lord F——'s protestant heart might beat responsively. Chamberlains and masters of the ceremony, officiating as high priests on this most catholic festival, arrange the "office" to be celebrated, in honour of the merriest saint in the calendar ; to whose glory, and to whose tune, the beautiful youths of his own Ireland dance, with a devotional ardour, far beyond the saltatory piety of the zealous jumpers of Wales, or of the dancing dervishes of Constantinople. None of the cold forms and still-life movements of the quadrille, invented by philosophers,

"atheists and politicians," neutralize its fervour. Fifty couples, danced down in dislocating springs and nops, attest the fanaticism of the *devotées*; and every joyous face and glittering eye, seems to say, with the disciples of a certain Italian saint, "plead for us, we dance with you."

St. Patrick's day is the saturnalia of all the elderly gentlemen, who have not "forgot themselves to stone." Many veterans *de la vieille roche*, go through a course of shampooing for the occasion, and anoint their joints, like the athletes of old, to attest their adherence to the creed of their fathers, and preach the doctrine of Paddy O'Rafferty, and of the Cameronian rant, in opposition to the heresy and schism of *Di tanti palpiti, dos-à-dos, and "cavalier scul."* This, too, is the hegira of ladies of a certain age, who, taking flight from the fatal pre-eminence to which Time had consigned them, bring the *weight* of their personal consequence to the support of an oppressed faith; and yielding to the flattering proposition of some young aid-de-camp on service, (and very hard service too,) drag the "feathered mercury" after

them, down the middle, and up again, to the interesting intonations of "go to the devil and shake yourself," or, "Patrick's day in the morning."\*

At last arrives the *media nocte* of the well worshipped saint, who for once sees the religious acrimony and christian animosity of the country he vainly protects, laid at the feet of national gaiety and sociality. Supper is announced; and the feast of the *cocagne* in France, or Naples, was but a luncheon, to this truly catholic entertainment. Hands that never met before, meet now on the necks of flasks and decanters. Fingers habitually raised in mutual scorn, are now busy in the same pie; while protestant nods at papist, in a tolerant hob-nob from "humble port to imperial tokay." Sir Harcourt takes wine with the author of "Florence Macarthy," and Counsellor O'Connell is helped to the wing of a pheasant by a pro-

\* This is the only occasion on which country dances are performed at the Irish Court. The ball on Patrick's night is always opened by the lively dance of "Patrick's day." The Dowagers of both sexes then come into play; and the "*Irish trot*" of many a veteran belle, recalls the good old times of the Rutland Court; when French quadrilles were "undreamed of in the philosophy" of the dancing of that noted epoch.

testant archbishop, with a mental reservation against all other "wings," in all other places.

Again, the dance is resumed; hearts, lost or mislaid, before supper, are detected on the person of the thief, after it. Partners, led out for a waltz, remain partners for life; and St. Patrick becomes the Hymen of the year, insuring the perpetuity of his rites, by the recollections which every recurrence of his joyous festival is sure to bring with it. Oh! that all the saints (St. Athanasius, the great protestant saint, included,) were thus worshipped! That all saints "militant here" in Ireland, maintained this spirit of social kindness, this interchange of social courtesy. To those who, like myself, have made the sacrifice, (the greatest that a true Irishman, and still more, a true Irishwoman can make,) that of living in the country, where patriotism has long been not only proscription, but martyrdom, what a change would such an order of things produce! what a perpetual recurrence of bitter sensations would it spare! what natural talent (now kept down by party spirit,) would explode, to illuminate the murky atmosphere of political disunion

like the bursting of a sky-rocket on the midnight gloom of a winter's night ! Who, that loves Ireland, that loves humanity, would not drop a bead, or light a taper, to propitiate the saint, who would work this best and greatest of miracles ? Be it hoped, that this Patrick's day, 1829, will be the harbinger of an whole year of national festivals ; and that he, who has represented the good saint on earth, by an act, which every Irish saint in the calendar will bless, will accept of this humble offering from one, who has proved herself no

" Swiss to fight for any God or king ;"

and who, true to her old vocation, flung no tributary laurel under the chariot wheels of the conqueror at Waterloo, yet now gratefully lays her shamrock at the feet of the emancipator of Ireland.

THE END.

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